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ABSTRACT

A study of adult learning and neighborhood renewal examined how further education (FE) colleges and Local Education Authority (LEA) adult education services contribute to neighborhood renewal in deprived areas and considered how their strategic role might develop in this field. The study indicates that the policy framework for post-16 learning and skills introduced in 2001 has the potential to be very helpful to the development of learning and skills for neighborhood renewal. However, because it is but one of many issues within the Learning and Skill Council's (LSC) span of control, key stakeholders in the sector may not yet be fully aware of its importance and their potential role in delivering it. These four dimensions of practice are particularly important to successful neighborhood renewal learning: (1) offering effective learning provision; (2) engaging the community in planning and development of learning provision; (3) working in and developing partnerships to promote learning; and (4) using resources that are conducive to good practices. Where the neighborhood renewal agenda is consistent with providers' missions and strengths they can provide the following strategic roles: (1) gateway to learning; (2) skills for economic competitiveness; (3) specific skills and knowledge; (4) strategic partner; and (5) community empowerment. The development of qualitative benchmarks to assess progress is recommended. (Contains 19 references and 2 appendices.) (MO)

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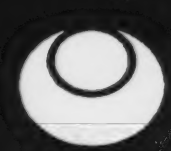

Neighbourhood Renewal Unit

learning and skills development agency

Learning and skills for neighbourhood renewal

Final report to the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit

Sue Taylor and Lisa Doyle

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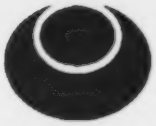

Neighbourhood
Renewal Unit

learning
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Learning and skills for neighbourhood renewal

Final report to the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit

Sue Taylor and Lisa Doyle

The findings and views expressed in this report
are those of the LSDA and do not necessarily reflect
the views of the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit

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Contents

	page
Acknowledgements	
Summary	1
Introduction and policy context	5
Good practice in learning for neighbourhood renewal	11
Commentary on characteristics of good practice	17
Learning provider case studies	36
Reviewing performance	45
Conclusions	53
Appendix 1: Study methods	58
Appendix 2: Courses contributing to neighbourhood renewal	62
References	67
Abbreviations and acronyms	69
Notes	70

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Summary

1. This report presents the main findings and conclusions from a study of adult learning and neighbourhood renewal, conducted by the Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA) in partnership with the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (NRU). The broad aims were to examine how further education (FE) colleges and Local Education Authority (LEA) adult education services contribute to neighbourhood renewal in deprived areas, and to consider how their strategic role might develop in this field. In addition to a national survey and fieldwork to assess how learning providers are responding to the neighbourhood renewal agenda, the research included a policy review and a statistical review of performance by providers in the deprived areas.

2. The policy context for the study includes two strategic objectives of the NRU: to achieve improvements in the quality of public services in the poorest neighbourhoods and to promote the development of specific skills and knowledge for neighbourhood renewal. The latter should enable residents, regeneration practitioners, public service professionals and civil servants to address problems of housing, health, educational attainment, unemployment and crime.

3. The study indicates that the policy framework for post-16 learning and skills introduced in 2001 has the potential to be very helpful to the development of learning and skills for neighbourhood renewal. For example, local planning and funding mechanisms help sharpen the focus on regeneration and neighbourhood renewal and on investing in provision that meets identified learner, community and employer needs. Moreover, the Learning and Skills Council's (LSC's) policies and processes cover cross-cutting issues such as regeneration, and partnership working – vital to neighbourhood renewal – is viewed as essential to the achievement of many post-16 policy goals.

4. There are, however, constraints. Neighbourhood renewal is but one of many issues within the LSC's span of control. LSC and learning providers are already subject to wide-ranging targets relating to participation, attainment and skills acquisition for young people and adults. The recognition of a specific skill and knowledge 'set' for neighbourhood renewal work is a relatively new phenomenon and key stakeholders in the learning and skills sector may not yet be fully aware of its importance and their potential role in delivering it.

5. Encouragement from the NRU and the LSC will therefore be needed if this type of learning provision is to receive due attention. The relative immaturity of the post-16 strategic planning, funding and quality arrangements may offer scope for the NRU to work with the LSC as it shapes the detail of these policies and processes. This would help ensure that learning and skills for neighbourhood renewal are given adequate regard. The report suggests policy 'levers' that might be used

to encourage learning providers to extend or strengthen their neighbourhood renewal work.

6. For the purpose of the study, 'good practice' in learning for neighbourhood renewal was defined in terms of responsiveness to the neighbourhood renewal agenda. The findings indicate that four dimensions of practice are particularly important to successful neighbourhood renewal learning.

   - Offering effective learning provision for neighbourhood renewal. This means provision that is either specifically designed to increase the capacity for neighbourhood renewal work among local people and local organisations, or contributes indirectly to this end.

   - Engaging the community in planning and developing learning provision for neighbourhood renewal. This means enabling residents, regeneration practitioners and professionals to play an active part in planning and developing programmes to meet their needs.

   - Working in and developing partnerships to promote learning for neighbourhood renewal. This means effective working with partnerships such as local strategic partnerships, learning partnerships and New Deal for Communities (NDC) partnerships, and developing innovative approaches to working with local residents, regeneration practitioners and other stakeholders.

   - Using resources that are conducive to good practice. This means not only effective use of available income streams but also attracting staff with the necessary skills and attributes to engage with local communities, and drawing on the knowledge and skills present in the community.

7. These dimensions were used as the basis for 10 case studies of learning providers and two 'small area' studies. A national questionnaire survey was also conducted. The findings indicate that:

   - the NRU skills and knowledge strategy is not yet widely understood in the sector and the provision of specific training for neighbourhood renewal is patchy

   - learning providers tend to interpret neighbourhood renewal learning as synonymous with widening participation activity, rather than as a distinctive set of skills and knowledge

   - it is helpful to view widening participation and specific skills and knowledge for neighbourhood renewal as opposite ends of a continuum, rather than as watertight categories of provision

- learning provision covering the full extent of the continuum is essential for successful neighbourhood renewal

- in spite of the finding that specific training for neighbourhood renewal is not widespread, there is evidence of valuable provision, directly or indirectly related to neighbourhood renewal, that offers models for wider use. This includes courses that develop skills for community working and skills for local leadership, as well as a wide range of community involvement, outreach and partnership activity that serves neighbourhood renewal goals

- there are signs that providers are now considering changes to their infrastructure, programmes and partnership links in the light of the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal.

8. These findings indicate that there is scope for learning providers to increase their contribution to the neighbourhood renewal agenda, where this activity is consistent with their mission and strengths. The report suggests five strategic roles that providers can play:

   - 'gateway to learning' – courses up to Level 2, including first rung, pre-entry and entry level courses; skills for employability and social inclusion. These provide the 'hook' for deeper engagement in learning and essential building-blocks for more specific neighbourhood renewal learning.

   - skills for economic competitiveness – provision at Level 3 and above to equip local people with skills and qualifications to become employed or work more productively, with benefits for inward investment.

   - specific skills and knowledge for neighbourhood renewal – courses to meet the requirements set out in *The learning curve* (Neighbourhood Renewal Unit 2002b), to develop and support residents, regeneration practitioners, professionals and civil servants working in deprived areas.

   - strategic partner – working with other organisations to build community trust and cohesion, brokering consensus and supporting smaller learning providers via funding and quality assurance arrangements.

   - community empowerment – developing and supporting local learning communities and assisting individuals and groups to play an active role in local affairs.

9. In view of the NRU's objective to improve the quality of public services in deprived areas, a statistical review of performance in post-16 learning provision in these areas was conducted, using geo-demographic analysis to enable comparison between different areas on a like-with-

like basis. The overall picture does not suggest substantial problems in performance relating to the deprived wards. In particular, evidence on participation in the learning and skills sector is encouraging, with a significantly higher rate for populations from deprived wards compared with the national average. In colleges, the retention rate for the deprived wards is slightly below the national figure and achievement is 5% below. In neither case do the disparities suggest substantial problems overall.

10. Building on the statistical review, the report suggests measures that might assist the NRU, learning providers and other agencies such as local LSCs to assess performance in deprived areas in future. The recommendations concentrate mainly on existing data sources familiar to college sector providers. Thus, statistics on participation, retention and achievement are recommended as the most robust sources. This data can be analysed to help judge the quality of post-16 education services in deprived areas, for example in attracting learners, motivating learners to complete courses and enabling them to achieve qualification goals.

11. The report also suggests that it may be helpful to develop qualitative benchmarks to assess progress against areas of good practice identified in the research. These areas would include the availability of suitable programmes and courses, how providers engage the community in planning and developing learning provision and how providers work with partnerships to promote learning provision for neighbourhood renewal. Such benchmarks could help to make neighbourhood renewal activity a more explicit component in quality and inspection regimes.

Introduction and policy context

1. This report presents the main findings and conclusions from a study of adult learning and neighbourhood renewal, conducted by the Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA) in partnership with the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (NRU), between July 2002 and March 2003. NRU was the main funding body for the study.

    - This first chapter outlines the aims, methods and the policy context for the study.
    - The second chapter sets out the characteristics of good practice in learning for neighbourhood renewal.
    - The third chapter comments on the characteristics of good practice, based on the research findings.
    - The fourth chapter gives four case study examples to illustrate how different providers approach learning for neighbourhood renewal.
    - The fifth chapter presents the main conclusions from two reviews: a statistical review of the performance of learning providers in deprived areas and a review of available data sources and other evidence to assess performance.
    - The sixth chapter considers the roles played by learning providers in neighbourhood renewal and how they might develop in future.

Study aims and methods

2. The broad aims of the study were to examine how further education (FE) colleges and Local Education Authority (LEA) adult education services contribute to neighbourhood renewal in deprived areas and to consider how their strategic role might develop. The results of the research were expected to:

    - raise the profile of this work among learning providers and partner organisations
    - inform the NRU
    - encourage more widespread adoption of responsive approaches to learning for neighbourhood renewal
    - help learning providers develop a well-defined strategic role in this field.

3. The research comprised six elements, detailed further in Appendix 1:

    - a policy review
    - a questionnaire survey of FE colleges and LEA adult learning services
    - case studies of 10 learning providers
    - two 'small area' studies
    - a statistical review

- a review of available data sources and other evidence to assess how providers are performing in deprived areas, including their contribution to learning for neighbourhood renewal.

Policy context

National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal

4. The government's National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal is a long-term (10–20 year) project designed to tackle deprivation in England's poorest communities (Social Exclusion Unit 2001). Targeted on the 88 local authorities with the highest concentrations of deprived areas, NRU programmes aim to develop community-based solutions in five key problem areas: housing, health, educational attainment, unemployment and crime. Two broader issues are also addressed: how to revive local economies and how to improve overall quality of life. The quality of local public services is a central concern.

5. The 88 local authorities benefit from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, which provides extra resources to address deprivation. New Deal for Communities (NDC) is one of the main NRU programmes, funding intensive regeneration activity in 39 of the poorest areas. Although these and other special funds have been introduced, the government is working towards harnessing the spending of mainstream local agencies (education, health, social services, housing, police etc) for the benefit of deprived neighbourhoods. For the agencies in question, this means 'focusing their resources – or "bending their spend" – explicitly on the places and people most in need of support' (Neighbourhood Renewal Unit 2002a:14).

Skills and knowledge for neighbourhood renewal

6. Part of the NRU's strategy is a programme to promote the development of the skills and knowledge required for neighbourhood renewal. Detailed in *The learning curve* (Neighbourhood Renewal Unit 2002b), the programme focuses in particular on the specific skills needed by residents, regeneration practitioners, public service professionals and civil servants to tackle the problem areas referred to above (Neighbourhood Renewal Unit 2002b). *The learning curve* builds on the Social Exclusion Unit's report *Learning lessons*, which emphasised the importance of developing and supporting community leaders as well as improving the skills of professionals to deliver core services (Social Exclusion Unit 2000).

7. The NRU has identified a set of knowledge and skills viewed as necessary for successful neighbourhood renewal. These can be summarised as:

- knowledge about 'what works' in solving problems in housing, education, unemployment, crime and health

- skills in applying knowledge (analytical and problem-solving skills)
- organisational skills (eg project management, finance and budgeting)
- interpersonal skills (eg community leadership, conflict resolution, partnership working)
- entrepreneurial skills (eg managing risk)
- reflective skills (eg evaluating success, learning from failure).

8. The present study addresses two broad questions of interest to the NRU.

   a. What learning programmes are offered to address the specific knowledge and skill requirements of neighbourhood renewal?

   b. As a major national resource for human resource development, how well does the learning and skills sector perform in the 88 neighbourhood renewal areas?

9. In relation to (a), findings from desk research conducted by the NRU in July 2002 suggested a deficit in suitable provision:

   There are no accredited learning programmes covering the range of neighbourhood renewal skills, knowledge and behaviours. Those that come nearest are either programmes developed for specific professions (for example, community work or housing) or else programmes that have not yet been accredited. There are specific national programmes, covering adult basic skills or tenant participation in housing, which touch on neighbourhood renewal issues but they do not provide the breadth of what is required.

   (Neighbourhood Renewal Unit 2002b:41)

Neighbourhood renewal and post-16 learning and skills policy

10. As part of the study, LSDA commissioned a review of policy for the post-16 learning and skills sector (conducted by Deirdre Macleod of Policyworks). The review examined the extent to which recent changes to the post-16 learning and skills policy environment, particularly in relation to FE colleges, are likely to support knowledge and skills development related to neighbourhood renewal. The findings summarised below are drawn from the full review presented to the NRU.

11. The changes in policy brought about as a result of the introduction of a new framework for post-16 learning and skills have the potential to be very helpful to the development of learning and skills for neighbourhood renewal. The framework has been designed to enable 'cross-cutting' issues to be addressed. The Learning and Skills Council's (LSC's) Remit and Grant Letters include specific references to regeneration activity.

12. Partnership working is regarded as essential to the achievement of many of the post-16 policy goals and is key to the operation of the LSC, as well as to the Regional Development Agencies' (RDAs') work on Frameworks for Regional Employment and Skills Action (FRESAs).

13. There are some early indications that the LSC's planning and funding processes are likely to be supportive of regeneration and neighbourhood renewal. For example, the Council's Local Intervention and Development Fund (LID) has been used to address specific learning and skills issues in different ways in each area. This fund and FE Learner Support Funds have also been 'bent' towards the most disadvantaged local areas.

14. Moreover, changes to the infrastructure created to advise and inform the LSC about learning priorities and needs will help sharpen the focus upon regeneration and neighbourhood renewal. Local learning partnerships and local strategic partnerships both have a vital role in contributing to regeneration strategies and are regarded as key partner organisations that the LSC should consult as it draws up local learning priorities.

15. The move to a planning-led approach to investment in provision which meets identified learner, community and employer needs is potentially extremely useful. Through its funding system, the LSC has the capability to influence the curriculum offered by providers and the mix of provision available locally. As with any other type of learning, it should seek to fund regeneration-related knowledge and skills programmes where there is an identified demand for that provision, provided it is consistent with the LSC's priorities and can be accommodated within its budget allocations. The local LSC-led Strategic Area Review mechanism (StAR), introduced in April 2003, provides an opportunity to assess the pattern of local learning and skills provision in the light of need (LSC 2003).

16. However, the LSC's span of control is very broad. It is responsible for the planning, funding and quality improvement of all post-16 learning provision. It is expected to meet wide-ranging, high-level targets on the participation, attainment and skills acquisition of young people and adults, as well as making rapid progress on a large number of fronts, from workforce development and progression into higher education to improving adult basic skills. As such, regeneration and neighbourhood renewal is but one of many issues which the LSC must tackle.

17. The identification of skills and learning for neighbourhood renewal as a specific skill set and the recognition of the importance of these skills for those who work in neighbourhood renewal is a relatively new phenomenon. As such, policy-makers and key stakeholders, including those responsible within LSCs and RDAs for preparing skills and learning strategies, may only now be becoming aware of the need for such skills to be considered as part of wider skills and employment

strategies. Until there is better recognition of the importance of these skills, neighbourhood renewal skills and knowledge may receive less attention, and be considered low priority for funding compared to other vocational skills.

18. As the post-16 learning and skills policy framework has been introduced recently (with effect from April 2001), and as the LSC is therefore still a relatively new organisation, many policies and programmes have yet to be fully implemented. Hence, in many areas there is still little empirical evidence available on the actual impact of the post-16 reforms. Even where policies have been implemented and programmes of activity have started, the LSC and the post-16 learning and skills policy framework have only been in operation for just over one year. This is a short time period over which to judge actions and priorities.

19. The relative immaturity of the post-16 strategic planning, funding and quality policies brings some advantages. Given that a number of policies and processes are still developing, such as local strategic planning processes, area reviews and professional teaching qualifications, there may well be scope to influence the content and operation of these policies, to ensure that they give adequate regard to neighbourhood renewal-related learning and skills development.

20. The capacity of FE colleges to contribute to neighbourhood renewal is also likely to be improved by the post-16 policy framework's focus on local planning and provider collaboration and by more specific policy proposals for the FE sector. Policies of college specialisation, improved focus on local needs and the professionalisation of college teaching staff are likely to lead to a better informed and higher quality response to neighbourhood renewal learning and skills needs where these needs exist.

21. It cannot be assumed that all colleges will be equipped to, or will wish to, deliver learning and skills for neighbourhood renewal. Colleges' decisions on mission and focus will be influenced by a range of operational and environmental factors, including competing policy priorities, and levels of local competition for learners. It will be important that the NRU finds ways to encourage those colleges that are committed to neighbourhood renewal work to recognise the importance of these skills and develop suitable provision. Key policy 'levers' that might be used in tandem or alone to bring about change are listed below.

    - Learning and skills targets, such as post-16 floor targets for deprived areas.

    - Strategic planning of learning and skills provision, including local LSC need and demand assessments and Strategic Area Reviews.

- Funding policies, including the 'disadvantage factor' in the national funding formula; Learner Support Funds; and the non-formula based LID fund.

- Quality improvement aimed at staff development, including the role of the Leadership College[1] and the proposed Lifelong Learning Sector Skills Council (see Association of Learning Providers et al. 2003 and LSDA 2003a).

- Strategic organisation and development policies (including policies to encourage providers or networks of providers to develop specialisms in occupational or skill areas).

22. Ministerial steers in relation to post-16 learning and regeneration suggest that it is adult and community learning (ACL) providers that are expected to take a leading role in neighbourhood renewal. ACL providers undoubtedly have an important part to play, particularly in encouraging people with limited prior experience of learning to gain skills that help them participate in neighbourhood renewal activities.

23. FE colleges could also have a role to play in delivering programmes of training for regeneration practitioners and public sector professionals. As more collaborative approaches to planning and delivering learning emerge, it is possible that local provider networks might offer an effective solution to delivering a range of learning programmes within a local area. This might involve community and voluntary sector providers working with colleges to deliver different types of learning and skills development to different groups of individuals involved in neighbourhood renewal, according to the particular focus and strengths of the providers.

Good practice in learning for neighbourhood renewal

Identifying good practice

24. What kinds of learning provision and practice contribute successfully to neighbourhood renewal? This is a difficult judgement to make: the neighbourhood renewal knowledge and skills strategy is at an early stage. Practice and provision are still developing, outcomes may not yet be known and longer-term research would be necessary to assess whether an effective impact has been made. As noted earlier (paragraph 4), the government expects the task of changing conditions in the poorest areas to be at least a 10-year project.

25. Against this background, we defined 'good practice' in terms of *responsiveness* to the neighbourhood renewal agenda. The first step was to devise a set of draft characteristics of good practice, drawing on authoritative literature, consultation with the NRU and the project Steering Group, advice from expert consultants, and knowledge from previous LSDA research. The objective was to distil the aspects of practice and general principles that should characterise efforts to develop successful learning for neighbourhood renewal. Expectations regarding learning provision and provider behaviour, suggested by *The learning curve*, were reflected in the draft.

26. Other elements of the study helped to test and refine the draft. A questionnaire survey examined learning providers' understanding and experience of neighbourhood renewal. It sought information, for example, on the way providers involve their communities, relevant courses offered and their main partnership links. The survey results drew attention to promising developments and emerging models as well as to factors that inhibit progress in this area.

27. From over 250 responses to the survey, 10 learning providers were selected as case study sites, based on indications that they were responding positively to the neighbourhood renewal agenda, and had experience that might offer valuable lessons for others. Interviews were conducted with senior staff and, wherever possible, with learners.

28. While the case studies of learning providers concentrated mainly on the provider perspective, two city-based 'small area' studies permitted consultation with a wider range of organisations and individuals, including residents in deprived areas, regeneration practitioners, voluntary and community sector managers and other stakeholders. Further details on the design and methodology of these studies are given in Appendix 1.

29. In line with the study aims, the case studies and small area studies were expected to assist in formulating a 'well-defined strategic role' for learning providers in neighbourhood renewal. This reinforced the need to focus on providers' strategies.

30. Thus, the research process differed from an approach focused primarily on describing useful initiatives or courses. One provider's useful initiative may not readily transfer to another and simply copying an initiative without altering important contextual factors (such as strategic management and the way in which programmes are planned and designed) may not lead to sustainable improvements. Instead, we have chosen examples of initiatives to illustrate the characteristics of good practice. This approach is in line with guidance issued to NDC partnerships by NRU:

> *...a 'cookbook' approach to good practice does not work. Instead, Partnerships need to translate general, evidence-based principles into practical approaches tailored to the needs of their neighbourhood and the wider context.*
>
> (Neighbourhood Renewal Unit 2003:1)

31. It is important to stress that it was not the remit of the project to evaluate individual providers. A range of evidence was used to inform our judgements about the likely ingredients for successful neighbourhood renewal learning. Self-assessment by providers was a significant source of evidence. As indicated, the views of learners, regeneration practitioners and other stakeholders were also sought. Those interviewed in the case studies and area studies played an active part in the process of distilling the elements of good practice.

Characteristics of good practice

32. Based on the characteristics refined in the fieldwork, we concluded that good practice in responding to the neighbourhood renewal learning agenda is likely to be shown in four main areas or dimensions of practice:

- offering effective learning provision for neighbourhood renewal
- engaging the community in planning and developing learning provision for neighbourhood renewal
- working with partnerships to promote learning for neighbourhood renewal
- using resources that are conducive to good practice.

33. These four dimensions are detailed further below, indicating the practices that our sources and fieldwork suggest are particularly important in developing learning provision for neighbourhood renewal. In the next chapter we provide a commentary and illustrations, based on the research findings.

Dimension 1

Offering effective learning provision for neighbourhood renewal

For example:

- courses and programmes that are specifically designed to increase the capacity for neighbourhood renewal work among local people and local organisations
- courses and programmes that contribute indirectly to the above purpose, with opportunities to accredit skills and advice and guidance on potential links with neighbourhood renewal activity
- programmes that are integrated into mainstream learning provision, removing barriers to entry and participation
- programmes that address the key *themes* (knowledge areas) for neighbourhood renewal (crime, health, housing, unemployment, educational attainment), with good identification of target groups
- programmes that develop *skills* for neighbourhood renewal (as described in *The learning curve*)
- using learning provision to help change culture and behaviour (eg through developing community leaders and helping communities to develop)
- relating provision to the needs of residents, regeneration practitioners and professionals and to the needs of organisations in the community as well as individuals
- working imaginatively and energetically to engage individuals and groups in learning
- adopting a range of effective learning methods or styles, both informal and formal, and making good use of approaches such as mentoring and coaching
- good progression opportunities (including employability and career/professional development pathways).

Dimension 2

Engaging the community in planning and developing learning provision for neighbourhood renewal

For example:

- encouraging and enabling residents, regeneration practitioners and professionals to play an active part throughout the process of planning and developing learning provision to meet their needs. The process goes beyond consultation
- enabling communities to access and influence resources and funding for learning provision
- developing a strategy to strengthen the partnership role of local communities (eg a phased approach, from consultation to becoming a genuine partner in developing learning, and, where appropriate, taking ownership of decisions on provision)
- establishing meaningful community representation in the decision-making bodies that develop learning provision
- drawing upon the knowledge and skills available in the community when developing learning provision
- as a learning provider, playing a conscious role in strengthening community cohesion
- adopting creative approaches to build trust and engage community members who are isolated, vulnerable or less active than others in local networks
- involving an increasing range of people within all communities (eg based on gender, race, age, faith, geography) in developing learning provision.

Dimension 3

Working with partnerships to promote learning for neighbourhood renewal

For example:

- working in/developing partnerships across key neighbourhood renewal themes (health, crime, unemployment etc)
- developing a shared vision and being willing to pool resources
- involving senior management and devoting adequate resources to partnership working
- effective working with appropriate organisations such as the learning partnership, local strategic partnership and the NDC Partnership Board
- effective multi-agency working, including public, private and voluntary and community sectors. 'Brokering' by individual learning providers and by local LSCs may assist
- using innovative approaches to partnership with the community (eg developing local residents and regeneration practitioners to work as community learning 'champions')
- working with partnerships led by the local community (eg through residents' assemblies or through local community/voluntary groups)
- effective working across phases of learning (pre-school through to further and higher education).

Dimension 4

Using resources that are conducive to good practice (staffing, expertise, funding, facilities)

For example:

- conducting local research and ongoing analysis to ensure that resources match community needs, evaluating impact and using the lessons learned to improve practice
- attracting staff with the necessary skills and attributes to engage with local communities
- drawing on resources of knowledge and skill in the community, in local professional groupings and in voluntary and community organisations
- developing creative approaches to outreach (eg using community-managed neighbourhood learning centres; using trained community members)
- providing appropriate role models (eg being responsive to issues relating to gender and ethnic group)
- making best use of/reshaping physical facilities for learning (eg making full use of school/college premises and outreach centres); offering accessible, familiar venues
- involving senior management
- providing good resources to support learning (eg childcare, transport)
- making good use of all suitable income streams to focus on local priorities for learning, including short-term discretionary funding to pilot new approaches, as well as long-term recurrent funding
- using resources effectively to support calculated risk-taking
- sharing good practice and drawing on models of what works well, to ensure that learning provision continues to improve
- implementing robust quality assurance of outreach provision.

Commentary on characteristics of good practice

34. This chapter draws on findings from the questionnaire survey, case studies and small area studies to explain and illustrate the characteristics of good practice. As indicated in the previous chapter, the characteristics were drafted prior to the case studies and area studies and were reviewed in our consultations with providers and other stakeholders. Though the case studies did not yield examples covering every aspect of good practice, the consultations indicated broad agreement that our list incorporated the most important elements.

General findings

35. The findings are indicative of valuable work that could be more widely promoted. They lend support to NRU's view, expressed in *The learning curve,* that specific training for neighbourhood renewal activity is patchy and that certain skill needs, particularly among regeneration practitioners and public service professionals, are not yet being met. However, our research qualifies this impression and illuminates the ways in which learning providers are already contributing to neighbourhood renewal learning.

36. It is also worth noting the signs that providers are considering changes in the light of the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal. Although there is evidence that some remain uncertain about the implications of the strategy, about two-thirds of the respondents to our questionnaire survey said that they were reviewing or changing their practice and provision. Some of the changes cited were:

- examining links with the Local Strategic Partnership and neighbourhood renewal agenda and how services can best meet these needs
- using intelligence from local partnerships and networks to inform the development of local provision with a focus on the social, economic and educational needs of learners in deprived areas
- devising programmes to develop residents in the various community activist roles
- planning to move the college away from the notion of main site(s) and access centres, to a situation where the college exists in good quality medium-sized sites, one in each disadvantaged neighbourhood – thus giving access to excellent provision very locally
- developing a much more community-focused local council by re-organising directorates to include a directorate for neighbourhood services with a 'community first' priority
- planning a programme to train community members in providing information, advice and guidance.

37. Our small area studies suggest a tendency in regeneration activities to focus on establishing structures and on creating and delivering programmes, without giving sufficient attention to the human resource development required to support and sustain this work. In other words, the need for a learning and skills strategy as a cornerstone of longer-term success may not have been accorded due priority.

38. Based on our consultations, we would argue that a local strategy to develop knowledge and skills for neighbourhood renewal should be developed in tandem with regeneration strategy. Steps should be taken to ensure that the former commands a sufficiently high profile. This needs to be addressed separately and in different ways from actions to improve public education services and raise educational attainment in the 88 neighbourhood renewal areas. Although the evidence is limited, our area studies suggest that regeneration managers may not always recognise this distinction. Even in an NDC partnership that has been in place for several years, discussion about learning strategy may still be at an early stage. As awareness of *The learning curve* grows, this difficulty may be overcome.

39. A centralised approach to neighbourhood renewal planning (such as that in evidence in one of the area studies) could lead to learning providers having only limited or indirect involvement in formulating and implementing a local knowledge and skills strategy. Based on our small-scale investigations, it would seem preferable to plan learning for neighbourhood renewal at a strategic level with all key stakeholders taking part.

Dimension 1

Effective learning provision for neighbourhood renewal

Providers' experience of neighbourhood renewal

40. A majority of learning providers who responded to our questionnaire survey (58%) view themselves as 'moderately experienced' as providers of learning for neighbourhood renewal and just over a quarter (27%) rate themselves as 'very experienced'. This leaves roughly 1 in 7 (15%) who believe they are 'not at all experienced'.

41. Based on the examples quoted in questionnaire responses, even among 'experienced' providers, a good deal of the provision cited would probably be better described as good widening participation activity rather than the development of skills and knowledge for neighbourhood renewal. Colleges and adult education services are more likely to understand their contribution to neighbourhood renewal in terms of improving participation and achievement levels, tackling basic skills deficits, and preparing people for employment through job readiness training or more specific vocational courses. Our case studies and area studies included learning providers that have made determined efforts to

widen participation but are not familiar with the requirements of *The learning curve*. By contrast, we saw other providers (such as **Northern College** and **Tower Hamlets College**) that are fully committed to neighbourhood renewal at all levels in the organisation and have a good understanding of the NRU's knowledge and skills strategy and how they can contribute to this.

42. A further finding is that provision that addresses the learning needs of regeneration practitioners (and emerging practitioners) is less common than provision targeted at residents in deprived communities. It was even more rare to find learning programmes aimed at raising awareness of neighbourhood renewal challenges and goals among local professionals who provide services to poor neighbourhoods (eg health visitors, social workers and teachers). In focus group discussions the need for this type of programme was voiced by residents, who felt that public service professionals often lack real understanding of the communities they serve.

Specific skills for neighbourhood renewal

43. Our research suggests that the *specific* skills and knowledge needed for neighbourhood renewal are not yet widely understood and translated into learning programmes in the FE college and LEA adult education sector. This is understandable, since the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal is relatively recent and the NRU learning strategy newer still. Moreover, the knowledge and 'skill set' described in *The learning curve* cannot easily be matched to the major programme areas funded in the learning and skills sector and on which providers will be more accustomed to base analyses of their courses.

44. This last point may help explain significant gaps in responses to the questionnaire survey. When asked to indicate which of the neighbourhood renewal knowledge and skills areas were developed by their courses, a third of the sample did not respond on skills and a fifth did not respond on knowledge.

45. Among respondents, the neighbourhood renewal knowledge and skill areas that elicited the highest response were as listed below.

Knowledge	**Skills**
Education 85% Health 59% Worklessness 53% Quality of life 51%	Community engagement 69% Partnership working 54% Conflict resolution 52% Equality and diversity 51%

46. Areas noted by fewer than half of respondents were as follows.

Knowledge	Skills
Reviving local economies 29% Housing and environment 20% Crime 15%	Finance and budgeting 48% Project appraisal and management 25%

Skills for working in the community

47. While learning provision specifically designed to increase community capacity for neighbourhood renewal work may not yet be widespread, our survey and case study work readily identified significant examples such as those described below and listed in Appendix 2. Providers are offering a mix of accredited and non-accredited courses – over a third of respondents to our questionnaire said that their neighbourhood renewal courses were accredited.

48. Several learning providers have developed programmes to train volunteers and/or workers in skills for community work. 'Community work' is a broad definition. The courses in question have usually been developed in response to local needs and hence vary in their purpose and content but are relevant to the neighbourhood renewal knowledge and skill areas. Some courses answer the requirement of *The learning curve* to develop 'emerging practitioners' among local residents. Others could be of assistance to those already working as regeneration practitioners but needing to improve their skills in engaging with communities. Practitioners may benefit from continuing professional development and support in the form of mentoring and coaching.

49. **Northern College** runs courses designed to develop community activists. The programmes include a pilot course for 'Neighbourhood Animateurs', funded by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), as well as courses for 'Community Health Animateurs' funded by the Health Action Zone. **Tower Hamlets College** offers 'Working in Your Community' courses aimed at staff and volunteers from organisations that work in the community. In association with Warwick University, **North Warwickshire and Hinckley College** runs a foundation degree in 'Community Development and Enterprise'. Learners on the course are active in the community or are professionals responsible for community provision.

50. **Bristol Community Education's** 'Working in the Community' course is aimed at women – several community education coordinators and tutors have trained through this route. **Medway Adult and Community Learning** offers a Community Leadership programme (providing qualifications from basic skills level up to Master's degree), as well as a Basic Skills for Citizenship programme (from entry level to Level 3) for active volunteers in community groups. The latter course helps volunteers become more effective in their jobs (eg in running committees).

Skills for local leadership

51. *The learning curve* places considerable emphasis on the need to train residents to exercise leadership roles.

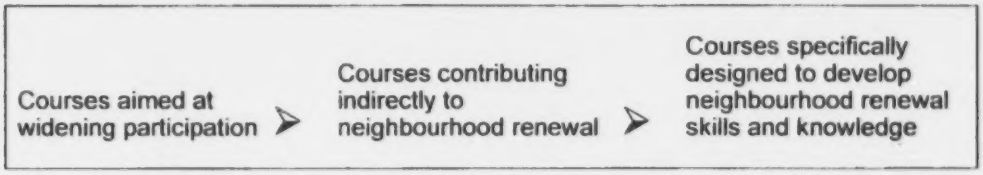
52. Learning providers play a valuable role in identifying and supporting learners and potential learners with leadership potential. Several providers have developed courses to encourage and assist people to take up positions of responsibility in the community. **Tower Hamlets College** runs a range of focused 'civic involvement' courses, such as 'Becoming a Board Member' for tenants of Registered Social Landlords and 'Be a School Governor' for Bengali and Somali parents. Similarly, **Bristol Community Education** runs an accredited course entitled 'Move into Public Life'. Designed to encourage local people to consider roles such as those of school governor, local councillor or advocate, the course is adapted to meet the needs of particular groups such as ethnic minority communities.

53. College and LEA post-16 citizenship programmes for young people/young adults also have a role to play in encouraging a sense of responsibility for community change. Evidence of this is available from the LSDA 16–19 Citizenship Development Programme.[2] For example, work involving colleges and other partners in **Oldham** (developed in the aftermath of riots in the town in 2001) aims to help reduce community tension through a multi-agency approach. Such programmes are designed to empower young adults and nurture a critical understanding of rights and responsibilities, showing how working together can achieve change. Residents in deprived areas may have had few previous opportunities of this kind and therefore stand to gain.

54. One of our case studies illustrated the tensions that can arise in schemes that successfully promote active citizenship. A community project used the skills gained through active citizenship training to work with partners on a (successful) Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) bid to develop a community centre. As a result, courses have been provided for community activists who have progressed to higher levels of qualification. However, tensions developed between the responsible local authority managers and activists over the control of the centre. Schemes with a serious intent to build community leadership and encourage ownership of learning facilities need to be aware of the potential for disagreement and as far as possible to plan how such issues can be addressed as the project develops.

From widening participation to neighbourhood renewal: a continuum of learning

55. It may be helpful to view learning provision and its relevance to neighbourhood renewal as a continuum:


Courses aimed at widening participation
Courses contributing indirectly to neighbourhood renewal
Courses specifically designed to develop neighbourhood renewal skills and knowledge

56. At one extreme are providers' efforts to widen participation in learning (eg removing barriers and/or actively promoting engagement) and to raise skill levels in poor communities (Taylor 2002). At the other are courses specifically designed to equip residents, professionals and regeneration practitioners with skills and knowledge to improve conditions and tackle problems of crime, poor health etc. Part way along the continuum is provision that widens participation and raises skill levels but also sets out to help communities address the problems they face. This is achieved by building in progression routes to further training and jobs that are relevant to local neighbourhood renewal goals, and/or by improving the skills of people already in community development posts.

57. A report on colleges' involvement in SRB schemes in London explains the value of widening participation in meeting regeneration aims:

> *Many of the SRB projects in which colleges are involved focus on widening participation in education. Learning is a means of individuals realising their potential and becoming productive members of their community. Thus education, training and support during learning are important tools for addressing issues of social inclusion, unemployment, poverty and inequality. Building an individual's confidence is a main aim of all the projects so that participants can increase their chances of gaining employment.*
>
> (Association of Colleges, London 2002:4)

58. Examples of widening participation from our case studies include the wide variety of outreach programmes offered by **Burnley College** (eg targeting women, ethnic minority groups, unemployed people); the 'Employment Solutions' programmes offered by **Tower Hamlets College;** or **East London Advanced Technology Training's** (ELATT's) Resource and Outreach Community Centre for IT (ROCCIT). Part of the ROCCIT tutor's responsibility includes outreach work among local people and organisations to identify local needs.

59. Further along the continuum might be **Derby LEA's** plans to create a 'Learning Village' on a former school site. The first phase of this project, the 'Learning Store', opened in May 2003. It offers learning in ICT,

Embedded Basic Skills and Art and Design. As part of the strategy for the development of the Learning Store, 'advocacy groups' have been set up to encourage participation and develop provision. Learners exercise responsibility for the management of the Learning Store through a management group that includes adults, young people and children from the local community.

60. Further still along the continuum are courses such as **North Warwickshire and Hinckley College's** foundation degree in 'Community Development and Enterprise', designed to develop the capacity of community leaders and their organisations as well as training those who work in the adult and community learning sector.

61. Occupying a similar position in the continuum would be **Northern College's** 'animateur' programmes (see paragraph 49), designed to develop community activists by giving them 'skills and knowledge to increase their effectiveness in the identification of community needs and the development, management and ownership of community-led activities'. Yet another example is **Bristol Community Education's** Open College Network (OCN) accredited course for 'Learning Champions', giving local people skills to encourage others to take part in learning. This is a successful model supported by the local LSC and being replicated elsewhere.

62. Some providers cover the whole continuum of provision while others may concentrate mainly on widening participation or on specific neighbourhood renewal training. This is likely to reflect factors such as: the view providers take of their missions and how these complement the roles played by other providers in the locality, and the providers' expertise and capacity for developing learning that is specifically geared towards neighbourhood renewal goals. There will also be differences between providers in the amount of their business that is devoted to neighbourhood renewal work: for some it is very substantial, while for others it may be quite small. **Northern College** falls into the former category, with its courses aimed at developing cohorts of community activists.

63. Ideally the nature and mix of provision available should reflect the stage the local community has reached in its development: for example, whether the need is primarily for 'first rung' learning programmes, or whether there are individuals and groups ready to take up more specific courses to equip them to embark on, or increase their involvement in, regeneration work.

64. Preconceptions about the learning needs of residents and communities should be avoided. It is vital to provide courses that help improve the skills of residents to take up jobs, deal with day to day needs and improve the quality of their lives. Courses aiming to develop the specific skills needed by regeneration practitioners, or by community leaders and activists and those with potential for these roles, are also important.

Our findings suggest that the second type of learning is unlikely to be fruitful if the first type is not in place (ie the first type of learning builds the capacity of communities to benefit from the second). Both should work together. Experience from initiatives such as Sure Start and neighbourhood IT learning centres suggests that community leaders of the future could well emerge from first rung and entry level learning, provided that vigorous efforts are made to engage local residents.

Dimension 2

Engaging the community in planning and developing learning provision for neighbourhood renewal

65. A key tenet of the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal is that change will not be effective without the active engagement of local communities – not only in identifying priorities but also in planning and delivering responsive programmes. This mirrors the lessons of research on ways to increase take-up of learning in disadvantaged communities, showing that energetic outreach work and imaginative community involvement by learning providers produce better outcomes (Taylor 2002).

66. All learning providers need to 'know their communities' to be able to devise relevant programmes that meet local needs. Arguably this is all the more important in deprived communities. In these areas there are likely to be individuals and groups that are out of touch with learning and perhaps disenchanted with what is on offer and distrustful of learning institutions and their staff or even hostile towards them. As well as knowing their clients and potential clients, learning providers need to be well connected with other local organisations that serve or act on the community's behalf. Establishing trust and building community cohesion are vital. These are legitimate roles for learning providers, particularly in view of research evidence on the reciprocal relationship between education and social capital (Haezewindt 2003).

67. Our case studies indicate that understanding and involving the community are complex and demanding tasks. An individual learning provider may well be working with several communities whose characteristics and expectations need to be differentiated. In some areas there are sharp contrasts between geographically close communities – for example, relatively wealthy areas cheek by jowl with areas of extreme disadvantage, or hidden pockets of 'genteel poverty' outside the boundaries of neighbourhood renewal areas. Cultural diversity is a further challenge: where communities are home to different cultures there is a risk that learning providers may be influenced by powerful but not necessarily representative voices.

68. Understanding the community may be a continuous process of updating and renewal. While some disadvantaged areas have 'stable'

communities (eg ethnic minority groups established for many years), others have populations that are constantly moving on (once they have achieved a certain threshold of prosperity), to be replaced by more disadvantaged groups. This transience makes it difficult for learning providers to establish a strong base of trust and understanding. It can also have the effect of continually draining away a key local resource – people and their collective knowledge and skills.

69. Another way of looking at community involvement is to consider how communities can be assisted to progress from being primarily 'recipients' of the services offered (eg by learning providers) to being self-determining and enterprising (in a position to demand, design or manage learning). Communities need different skills appropriate to their stage of development.[3] Our case studies suggest that communities differ in their capacity to organise themselves to pursue their best interests: learning providers need to be aware of these differences, by developing a good 'profile' of local communities and their needs. Local needs assessments using statistical evidence contribute to this awareness, as does the kind of qualitative research illustrated by Islington LEA's Citizen's Conference (see paragraphs 78–79).

70. Communities that are ready either to articulate their demands for learning provision, or to take on the management and delivery of learning themselves, can present challenges to traditional ways of working. The working culture of the learning provider can therefore be very influential. For example, one of our case study colleges promotes an ethos of empowerment and 'positive affirmative action' to counter the language of disadvantage, disaffection and disability.

How learning providers engage their communities

71. Our questionnaire survey indicates that learning providers are very active in promoting community involvement in their provision. 'Community involvement' covers a wide spectrum, from consultation on plans for provision, through to enabling community members to play an active part in developing learning programmes. Particularly noteworthy examples, drawn from our case studies, are highlighted in paragraphs 74 to 85.

72. Based on responses to our questionnaire survey, some approaches are more common than others.

- The delivery of courses in outreach centres is the most common type of community involvement reported.
- The majority of providers frequently involve local residents, regeneration practitioners and professionals in shaping or designing courses – though residents are involved slightly less often than other groups.
- Learning providers often work with community development workers to reach residents in deprived communities.

- The majority of providers often design new courses or programmes to fit the needs of community groups and organisations.

73. Three types of community involvement appear to be less common:

- engaging local residents as outreach workers to promote learning in deprived neighbourhoods
- training residents in deprived neighbourhoods to teach others
- franchising courses for delivery by local community groups and organisations.

Re-thinking 'outreach'

74. **Burnley College** believes that 'traditional' approaches to outreach are not effective for neighbourhood renewal. The college has shifted its approach to one focused on finding suitable funding, which it then channels to community groups, tenants' groups and ethnic minority groups. These groups use the funds to deliver their own agenda but with monitoring by joint steering groups. The college believes it makes a major contribution to neighbourhood renewal by giving communities the ownership of ideas and activities.

75. Burnley College's outreach work is supported by three full-time Community Learning Representatives (CLRs) – local residents recruited by the college and based in community organisations in selected neighbourhoods. Through the CLRs, local residents are able to access informal and formal learning provision within their own neighbourhoods. The offer is wide-ranging, from one to one advice and guidance, small house groups, 'fun' learning days or events, basic skills support and taster events, right through to more formal learning.

76. **Northern College** has found that one of the most effective ways to work with communities is by attaching tutor/organisers to communities to promote neighbourhood renewal activities. This has proved particularly useful in the mining communities of South Yorkshire, where there was previously heavy reliance on NUM branch secretaries to organise many activities.

Residents as experts

77. *The learning curve* calls for ways to develop the skills of residents as 'community experts' who can influence practice, act as advocates for their community and hold local service providers accountable.

78. This approach can be seen in the model of community engagement developed by **Islington LEA's** Lifelong Learning Service, which used the knowledge and expertise of people from local disadvantaged communities in drawing up its Adult Learning Plan, thus rejecting a 'deficit' model of local citizens.

79. With the help of Opinion Leader Research (a company that has pioneered the development of citizen's panels and juries), the LEA devised a Citizen's Conference. Delegates were recruited from socio-economic groups that are less likely to participate in learning, but included a balance of people who had not been involved in learning since leaving school and those who had participated successfully in learning in the last two years. The aim was to identify what factors had helped people transcend barriers to learning. Focus groups were used to further deepen their understanding of the issues and to plan the conference. Delegates were paid £50 per day for giving their expertise and were told in advance that their recommendations would be implemented. 'Witnesses' from similar social backgrounds across the country also took part. The event recorded high levels of involvement and satisfaction. Findings were presented to senior officers and politicians, and conference participants were engaged in implementing them.

80. **Tower Hamlets College** is developing a new approach to youth work training, working in a consortium with higher education. A cross-sector group of practitioners and local young people is working to redefine the culture of youth work training to make it relevant to local needs and to find appropriate accreditation routes for local people.

Residents as outreach workers

81. **Bristol Community Education** runs an OCN-accredited course for 'Learning Champions'. Local residents are trained in interviewing techniques and strategies to enable them to assist others in the community to access learning. Learning Champions prepare a report based on their findings and make recommendations for learning provision. They are paid for the interviews they undertake in the community and also when they support new learners accessing a centre for the first time.

82. In view of the scheme's success, it is now supported by the local LSC as a way of attracting more learners, and is being extended to Bath and North Somerset. Bristol also offers an introductory course ('Stepping into Learning') which acts as a progression route to the Learning Champions course. Learners are introduced to local learning opportunities and asked to devise a questionnaire to explore the learning interests of their families and friends.

83. Similarly, **North Warwickshire and Hinckley College** trains and pays former adult students, who have sampled education recently, to act as 'learning ambassadors' to support and guide others into learning. Three Learning Ambassador schemes have been established in different areas, each with a multi-agency steering committee.

Training local residents to teach others

84. A number of colleges are active in recruiting and training local residents to teach others. This can serve two, linked goals: to develop effective outreach and to build staffing profiles that are more representative of the local population profile. **Tower Hamlets College** develops members of the local community to become future tutors and trainers on college programmes. **South Birmingham College** has recruited local women as 'parent partners', some of whom have progressed into college tutor posts. **Bristol Community Education** delivers a Positive Action Tutor Training programme, targeting under-represented communities, offering additional support so that new tutors can join the service, and providing positive role models for the targeted communities. A scheme with a similar concern for progression, though with a different job destination in view, was developed in Manchester. East Manchester New Deal for Communities 'Beacons' programme and partner agency, Step Ahead, developed a programme to train volunteers from the community in advice and guidance. **Manchester College of Art and Technology (MANCAT)** delivered the programme. Several volunteers subsequently found local work in advice and guidance.

85. Other examples include learning providers that train ethnic minority adults to teach on adult learning courses, or offer ICT training to enable residents to train their peers in local ICT centres.

Dimension 3

Working with partnerships to promote learning for neighbourhood renewal

86. By definition, neighbourhood renewal is a partnership matter, since its goal is to find solutions to multiple problems affecting deprived areas (crime, poor health, poor housing, unemployment etc). It also means engaging with communities that are not at ease with, or do not readily trust mainstream institutions. These factors point to the need for learning providers to develop strong connections with a variety of organisations, networks and intermediaries.

87. Learning providers also need to work together. One of the barriers to effective learning provision for neighbourhood renewal is unhelpful competition between providers. There can be tensions (eg in relation to recruiting learners) when responsibilities overlap, functionally and geographically. An overload of partnerships – or perhaps partnerships that lack good connecting structures – can also be problematical and slow down decision-making.

88. When asked (in our questionnaire survey) to name the types of partnerships they found most productive for developing learning provision for neighbourhood renewal, learning providers highlighted their

relationships with voluntary and community organisations (followed in order of priority by links with schools). Partnerships with police and probation, employers and health services were accorded lower priority – an indication that these may need strong encouragement if learning is to contribute to resolving problems of crime, unemployment and health. It is also noticeable that few providers give high priority to NDC partnerships, though this will in part reflect the limited geographical spread of the NDC programme and the fact that NDC partnerships are still relatively new and developing.

89. Table 1 shows the partnerships in rank order of priority, based on the number of respondents selecting them in their 'top 5'.

Table 1: Learning providers' main partnerships for neighbourhood renewal

Partnership	% respondents
Partnerships with voluntary and community organisations	81
Partnerships with schools	54
Learning Partnership	48
Local Strategic Partnership	41
Partnerships with youth and community services	36
Partnerships with further education	31
Information, Advice and Guidance partnership	29
Partnerships with adult education	28
Partnerships with health services	26
Partnerships with religious organisations	22
Partnerships with employers	18
Partnerships with social services	18
Other productive local partnerships	18
Partnerships with Connexions	14
Partnerships with police and probation services	13
Partnerships with higher education	12
New Deal for Communities	11
Frameworks for Regional Employment and Skills Action	2

90. It should be stressed that partnership building is not the responsibility of learning providers alone. In our area studies, we observed that other key players in local regeneration had not taken early steps to involve learning providers fully in shaping regeneration plans and devising appropriate education and training. This suggests a missed opportunity. Concerted action by learning providers and regeneration experts at an early stage would help put in place appropriate education and training and find ways to integrate neighbourhood renewal skills into other programmes.

91. Despite the low rating given to NDC partnerships, partnership working appears to be a common activity for many learning providers. In addition to the high priority accorded to partnership with voluntary and community organisations, some providers volunteered the information that they were working productively with partnerships not in our list. The most common of these spontaneous references were to SRB or

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regeneration partnerships and other partners such as housing services and Sure Start, which has a core objective to strengthen communities and build pathways out of poverty.

92. The following paragraphs highlight interesting and innovative approaches to partnership in the management of learning provision, taken from our case studies.

93. **Northern College** is involved in creating a sub-regional Academy for Community Leadership, officially launched in July 2003. The academy is to consist of a loose consortium of training providers and a central directorate. The directorate's role will be to act as an enabling, commissioning body, ensuring adequate resources and capacity in the sector and a match between supply and demand for community leadership training. Though the directorate will be hosted initially by Northern College, it is envisaged that the academy will become an independent, community-owned organisation in the longer term.

94. **Birmingham and Solihull LSC's** Adult and Community Learning Review drew attention to the important role played by the voluntary and community sector as a provider of learning opportunities (though these opportunities may not necessarily relate specifically to neighbourhood renewal). As a result, the LSC is now moving to a system of tripartite agreements or licensing arrangements. This involves the licensing of franchised provision by colleges to voluntary and community organisations, based on a tripartite agreement between the college, the voluntary organisation and the local LSC. These agreements are designed to guarantee that the voluntary organisation is treated fairly by the college in funding terms. They also ensure that the college is responsible for a programme to develop the voluntary or community organisation over a 3 or 4 year period to the point where it can become a direct provider should it wish to do so.

95. This approach has been piloted by Matthew Boulton College, working with Birmingham Rathbone, a voluntary organisation specialising in work with people with disabilities.

96. Additionally, Birmingham and Solihull LSC is making creative use of the new Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities (NLDC) Fund in support of the development of tripartite agreements. For example, colleges are being paid through NLDC to carry out organisational assessments/health checks of voluntary organisations with a view to analysing their state of readiness for direct contracting with the LSC.

97. **North Warwickshire and Hinckley College's** partnership strategy is worthy of note. Staff at all levels in the college engage in partnership work. Area partnerships for adult and community education appear to work particularly well. There is evidence of good 'partnership penetration': in one ward, for example, the college links with every organisation and association. The college also groups providers in an

area into a partnership known as 'The Learning Exchange' to help partners exchange information and make the best use of their resources. This initiative should also help avoid duplication and over-supply of services.

Brokering consensus

98. Neighbourhood renewal initiatives sometimes become a focus for rivalry between community groups and for dissent between stakeholders who may have vested interests. In communities that lack cohesion, there is likely to be mutual suspicion, lack of trust and even hostility. Our case studies provide evidence that learning providers – particularly those with a long history of partnerships in the community and with associated local agencies – can play the vital role of 'consensus broker and builder' in such circumstances.

Partnerships for quality

99. Good partnerships can also help to deliver on the 'quality' agenda, as suggested in paragraph 94. Learning for neighbourhood renewal already involves a range of different learning providers other than colleges and LEA adult education services. Voluntary and community organisations are important players. Some smaller organisations – including small organisations in the voluntary and community sectors – do not have an established infrastructure for quality assuring learning provision and are unfamiliar with national quality assurance and inspection procedures. FE colleges have an infrastructure in place and considerable experience of these regimes.[4] Part of their contribution to the infrastructure for neighbourhood renewal learning may therefore be to develop 'quality improvement' relationships or partnerships that build capacity in less experienced organisations.

100. **Islington LEA** provides a further example. To judge the success of 21 neighbourhood learning centres, delivered by different partners, the LEA places strong emphasis on the use of quality criteria based on the Ofsted/Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) Common Inspection Framework.

Dimension 4

Using resources that are conducive to good practice (staffing, expertise and funding)

101. As shown in an earlier study by LSDA on good practice in widening adult participation, a crucial influence on success is the ability to secure and deploy a range of resources in a businesslike and effective way (Taylor 2002).

Funding

102. An important question for the present study was that of how learning providers fund their neighbourhood renewal activities. A core commitment in the government's action plan for neighbourhood renewal is that this work should not rely on 'one-off regeneration spending' (often relatively small amounts of money) but instead should be able to call upon mainstream public service budgets. The concept of 'mainstreaming' means 'influencing mainstream services to make them work better in deprived neighbourhoods' and 'focusing their resources – or 'bending their spend' – explicitly on the places and people most in need of support'. The NRU has stated that mainstream services 'should be flexible enough to respond effectively to local needs and be resourced to do so' (Neighbourhood Renewal Unit 2002a:14).

103. The LSC framework for planning and funding post-16 learning and skills has been designed to contribute to regeneration policy and in many ways appears to support neighbourhood renewal strategies. Under the national funding formula, the main vehicle for addressing the needs of disadvantaged learners has been the 'widening participation uplift' (now the disadvantage funding factor).

104. A further source, outside the national formula, is the LSC's Local Intervention and Development Fund (LID), to be used 'flexibly and in new ways to address the remaining barriers to learning'. Guidance to local LSCs on their use of the LIF (Local Initiatives Fund, replaced by LID) was particularly supportive of knowledge and skills development for neighbourhood renewal, making explicit reference to activities such as training for community leaders and resident consultancies.

105. Our questionnaire survey invited respondents to prioritise a list of funding sources, to help identify the main income streams used by providers to fund their learning provision for neighbourhood renewal. Respondents were asked to prioritise their top three sources: the list below is based on a point scoring system.

- Learning and Skills Council (LSC) – mainstream funding
- Single Regeneration Budget (SRB)
- European Social Fund (ESF)
- LSC non-mainstream funding
- LEA mainstream funding
- Neighbourhood Renewal Fund
- LEA non-mainstream funding
- Local authority (not LEA)
- New Deal for Communities (NDC)
- Ethnic Minority Achievement Grants
- Other funding sources.

106. As shown by the above list, mainstream LSC funds appear to be the main source used by colleges and LEAs to fund their learning provision for neighbourhood renewal, suggesting that mainstream funding is being 'bent' to meet the needs of the most deprived communities. In the college sector this response may reflect in part the importance of the disadvantage factor. LEA mainstream funding is halfway down the list and less important than SRB, ESF and non-mainstream LSC resources. The Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and NDC funding have lower priority than these.

107. Among the 'other funding sources' mentioned by respondents, the most common was the New Opportunities Fund. Others included:

- Capital Modernisation Fund
- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
- UK Online
- Adult and Community Learning Fund
- Sure Start
- Regional Development Agency (RDA)
- Information, Advice and Guidance – Additional Support Funding
- Education Action Zone (EAZ).

108. Given the range of income streams available, there is a risk that resources may be duplicated (eg by using capital funds when needs could be met by making existing buildings more accessible and promoting their use). Funding yields value when there is a clear vision of what can be achieved. In **Birmingham,** for example, SRB2 and SRB3 funds were used in two initiatives, to re-design a community building to create modern classrooms, and to convert part of an Adult Education Centre into an Open Learning Centre with the objective of increasing access to learning.

109. Another report, describing outstanding work in 'sustainable community development' involving partnership between churches and learning providers, argues that this kind of work is not driven by funding, but rather that partners draw together available funding from a number of sources 'to resource their own vision' (Methodist Church *et al.* 2002). This means a constant search for suitable funds, using networks and partners to keep abreast of multiple funding sources that can be exploited for work that does not fit within the mainstream LSC 'envelope'.

110. Our research lends support to this view, though with the important qualification that the existing funding arrangements can be an impediment to progress. There is a perception that neighbourhood renewal learning is not properly funded and that the funds that do exist are mainly short-term. This is not helpful for work with deprived communities that badly need consistent and stable help. The most commonly heard pleas in the study were for simplified funding arrangements consistent with longer-term planning and sustainable

activity, and for a funding profile that reflects the 'lead-in' or development time needed when working with 'harder to reach' groups. Also mentioned were the problems experienced by smaller organisations (often vital in community-based learning provision); dealing with the bureaucracy of funding bids often exceeds the resources and expertise they are able to devote to this activity.

111. A difficulty associated with reliance on short-term, discrete funding packages is the need to respond to different and possibly conflicting expectations on the part of funding bodies. For example, there is not always a good 'fit' between the purposes for which regeneration funds are designed, and the goal of enhancing the learning infrastructure to support neighbourhood renewal. This suggests, perhaps, the need to bring more neighbourhood renewal learning activity within the scope of LSC 'mainstream' funding.

People, expertise and facilities

112. Having the right people to do the job is a key criterion for success. An important lesson from the study is the need for learning providers and regeneration managers to use the knowledge and expertise available locally. **Birmingham City Strategic Partnership,** in a review of its own learning needs, identified 'being smarter in pulling in resources, using existing expertise' among the priorities.

113. As illustrated earlier (paragraphs 81–85), a number of learning providers engage and train local residents to 'reach' other residents in the community, recognising the value of their local knowledge and their ability to empathise with and gain the trust of neighbours. The earlier examples showed different models of practice. **South Birmingham College's** Parent Partnership Project, in conjunction with the LEA, is an outstanding example: under this scheme, the college recruits local women/mothers to work in local schools to identify the learning needs of parents. A number of women working as 'parent partners' in deprived neighbourhoods have progressed to permanent posts as classroom assistants or members of the college's own staff, including tutor posts. The college has established a dedicated Community Development Unit able to draw in relevant local expertise and skills and combine these with the college's specialist expertise (eg in curriculum and programme development).

114. **Tower Hamlets College** also actively seeks to develop members of the local community to become tutors and trainers on its programmes. It uses dedicated staff with youth and community education backgrounds to build learning provision and develop trainees to become 'trainers of the future'. This approach recognises that effective community engagement requires skilled development workers.

115. **Islington LEA** has been very creative in finding ways to draw upon the resources of the community. The Adult and Community Learning Fund

has been used to develop a 'Handholders Project', a service for people who want someone to support them when they begin new learning or progress to a new course. The fund is used to recruit and train mentors who are recent 'returners' to learning. We noted earlier how the LEA devised a Citizen's Conference to involve residents as experts on their own learning needs, supported by 'witnesses' (paragraphs 78–79). 'Handholders' takes forward a recommendation from the conference and has been developed by conference participants.

116. **Fircroft College** (in Birmingham) believes that trained community activists who can 'cascade' good practice are the most important resource needed for successful neighbourhood renewal. A residential college, Fircroft runs community leadership courses as part of a government pilot programme and recruits from a wide area. In addition to its residential provision, the college delivers 'at the point of need' through an outreach centre and outreach provision in rural villages and towns or in mosques and community centres. Residential training is also delivered in partnership with organisations that are part of the local infrastructure, such as residents groups, Race Equality Councils, Community Councils and Councils for Voluntary Service.

117. Appropriate facilities, used well and to the full, are another key element of good practice. In the course of our study we found an example of a well-intentioned initiative that was not yet achieving its aim of engaging the local community because of premises that were not sufficiently 'user friendly'. A major local employer, in partnership with a trade union, the local college and adult education service, had established a learning centre on its own site, offering a range of courses relevant to the requirements of *The learning curve*. It appeared that local residents were discouraged from using the centre by its 'prestige' location and somewhat exclusive ethos. This contrasts with other provision offered by the LEA in converted housing: here, learners felt that they were on familiar and comfortable ground.

Learning provider case studies

118. This chapter provides more detailed examples of four learning providers featured in earlier chapters. The aim here is to give a snapshot of the context in which they operate, their view of the role they play in neighbourhood renewal, and promising interventions or ways of working.

Case study 1 – Northern College

Case study 2 – Burnley College

Case study 3 – Bristol Community Education

Case study 4 – Tower Hamlets College

Case study 1

Northern College

Context

119. Northern College is one of five long-term residential colleges nationally. The college was established by the Labour movement in South Yorkshire and is now by far the biggest national residential college with approximately 7,000 enrolments, of which fewer than 100 are under 19 years of age. Provision relating to community regeneration constitutes 35% of the college's core work.

120. The college operates predominantly as a regional college with the vast majority of its work covering Yorkshire and Humberside. There is a strong focus on South Yorkshire Objective 1 Region. This area contains a significant number of neighbourhood renewal wards.

Role

121. Northern College has a long tradition of working in the area and consequently there is a common understanding of mission and approach among staff and learners. Community development work directly related to neighbourhood renewal has become a key part of its mission.

122. Staff members possess a good understanding of, and sensitivity to issues that concern deprived neighbourhoods and are therefore well placed to develop skills and knowledge for capacity building in neighbourhood renewal. The college is committed to identifying what is important to community groups and being flexible and responsive in meeting their needs.

Activities

123. Northern College believes that South Yorkshire needs activists who are part of the community. The college focuses on group learning rather than individual learning for this work, catering for tenants' groups, ethnic minority groups and community groups. A focus for the training of activists has been the development of 'animateur' programmes. These OCN-accredited programmes had their origins in 1997 in a pilot project in Rotherham and have developed into two programmes: 'Neighbourhood Animateurs' and 'Community Health Animateurs', offering flexible training structured around residential courses and work placements (eg with community partnerships). Discussions with learners from these programmes reveal a high degree of satisfaction. This is supported by internal and external evaluation reports.

124. The college is active in a number of partnerships including strategic partnerships, community groups, tenants' groups, charities, the Regen School and LEA groups. It has identified the need for a sub-regional focus to ensure consistency of effort and is pursuing this by taking part in plans to create a sub-regional Academy for Community Leadership for South Yorkshire. It is envisaged that the academy will consist of a loose consortium of training providers with a central directorate, initially hosted by Northern College. Launched in July 2003, the Academy will equip community activists and fieldworkers involved in regeneration and neighbourhood renewal with the skills and knowledge they need to make a positive impact.

Case study 2

Burnley College

Context

125. For several days in June 2001 Burnley was the scene for a series of violent disturbances. Two particular local communities suffered: one a predominantly ethnic minority community and the other a mixed community with large numbers of Asian shopkeepers and families. The taskforce set up in response to the disturbances called for all organisations in the area to produce action plans to address the issue of community cohesion, based on guidance from the taskforce. The college is actively pursuing this agenda. An important factor identified by the taskforce report – and supported by the experiences of the college's widening participation programme – is that diverse cultures exist in parallel, with few signs of integration.

Role

126. Burnley College sees itself as the main provider of adult education services to Burnley. The core work of the college can be broken down into three areas of provision: programmes for 16–19 year olds, employment-related skills and community-focused work. From an overall 11,000 people who attend college programmes, some 2,500 have their programmes delivered in community settings. The college sees 'community development' work as important to its mission, using the term to encompass its neighbourhood renewal activities and widening participation programmes. It regards itself as a major contributor to, and partner in, neighbourhood renewal in Burnley.

127. Burnley College believes that strong partnerships are needed to support work in neighbourhood renewal if it is to be successful. The college supports the Local Strategic Partnership and is expected by other partners to play a major role. The principal chaired the partnership for the first six months of its operation at the request of partners, who viewed the college as neutral and central to its success. Local communities also regard Burnley College as neutral and non-sectarian and therefore in a prime position to develop and initiate multicultural learning opportunities.

Activities

128. Rather than employing the traditional type of outreach activity for their neighbourhood renewal work, the college now focuses on projects for which it sources the funding, to be passed on to community groups. These groups use the funds to deliver their own agenda, but with monitoring by joint steering groups. Beneficiaries include tenants' groups and ethnic minority groups. A focus for this work has been the development of the Community Learning Representative (CLR)

programme, which started in 2002 in three community centres. The CLR programme targets local residents as potential Community Learning Representatives who will provide opportunities for residents to access informal and formal learning provision in their own communities. This is a model that could be replicated elsewhere.

129. The CLR model – of developing close trusting partnerships, then accessing and allocating funds to the partners to allow them to implement their own priorities – has been a particularly useful strategy. After the initial success of the CLR programme, the college has made a successful bid for Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities (NLDC) funding to the LSC. The bid was made on behalf of three key community organisations to fund their work with informal groups. Thus, the college has taken responsibility for finding funds which are fully devolved to meet community requirements.

Case study 3

Bristol Community Education

Context

130. The relatively prosperous north-west of Bristol – close to the M4 corridor and home to industries including defence, IT and financial services – contrasts with large outer city estates in south Bristol with high unemployment rates, poor infrastructure and poor transport links to the city centre. Much attention has been given to addressing the needs of the inner city area of St Paul's with its large African Caribbean population. Provision in the deprived outer city areas has developed comparatively recently.

131. The city of Bristol encapsulates 10 designated neighbourhood renewal areas. Members of the Community Education Team work closely with the neighbourhood renewal units in each area and link their education plans with neighbourhood renewal plans.

132. Within the city there is good cooperation between residents, regeneration practitioners and professionals. All appear to be involved in the city's Lifelong Learning Networks and there was some praise for local doctors who had long been engaged in promoting healthcare activities with local residents in deprived areas.

Role

133. Bristol Community Education's contribution to neighbourhood renewal is based on four key strengths:

- knowledge and expertise gained through community involvement
- clear understanding of local needs
- innovative practice
- ability to work with neighbourhood renewal units.

134. A recent ALI inspection awarded Bristol LEA a high grade for its community learning programme. Although overall leadership and management of the general adult education programme received a low grade, interagency partnership working was recognised as a key strength. Partnerships include local Lifelong Learning Networks, Bristol Neighbourhood Renewal Working Group and Bristol City Council Equality Forums. Bristol Community Education is also represented on the Bristol SRB Partnership at local levels and participates in innovative partnerships such as the Skills for Community Change Steering Group. This grew out of the Bristol Neighbourhood Renewal Network and is reviewing the possibility of a 'community curriculum'.

Activities

135. Bristol Community Education has developed several programmes that contribute directly or indirectly to neighbourhood renewal learning. These include:

- an OCN-accredited programme entitled 'Move into Public Life', designed to encourage local people to consider roles in local life (school governors, councillors, advocates etc). People are taught skills such as public speaking, working with the press and lobbying. The course is run in different settings and has been adapted to focus on the needs of particular groups (eg ethnic minority populations, gay men and lesbians). One resident who took this course went on to stand for the local council and won the seat.

- 'Working in the Community', which is aimed at women and focuses on employment opportunities involving community work. A number of community education coordinators and tutors have obtained their jobs by coming up through this particular route.

- an OCN-accredited course for 'Learning Champions'. This course trains local people in interviewing techniques and strategies to enable them to go out and engage others in learning. Learning Champions also write a report based on their interview findings and make recommendations for learning provision.

136. Bristol Community Education offers programmes aimed at engaging learners who might then go on to be directly involved in neighbourhood renewal work. 'Stepping into Learning' is an introductory course for people who might progress to the 'Learning Champions' course. Learners are introduced to local learning opportunities and then devise a questionnaire to find out what their family and friends might be interested in studying. This and the 'Learning Champions' course are viewed as successful programmes with potential to be replicated elsewhere.

Case study 4

Tower Hamlets College

Context

137. Tower Hamlets College is a large FE institution serving an area of London with high levels of social deprivation. The Outreach and Regeneration Team coordinates a range of regeneration programmes and projects, working with the public sector, voluntary and community organisations and employers to reach sections of the community who are at risk of being excluded from education or employment. Team members work with lead groups in the local community, particularly those from ethnic minorities. Many projects promote learning in different ways.

Role

138. The college has made a strategic commitment to supporting local community development and adopts a proactive approach. It works in partnership with a broad base of community, voluntary and statutory groups, as well as employer representatives, other learning providers and regional networks. The aim is to ensure that perceived needs are identified and met through partnership working and obtaining funding for these partners when needs fall outside LSC funding guidelines. Tower Hamlets College also has a proactive approach to working with the Local Strategic Partnership and emerging neighbourhood management pilots.

Activities

139. The college offers a range of initiatives to reach excluded learners, from drop-in advice and employment placement, to a variety of ESOL and basic skills and non-accredited taster courses delivered in the community by local groups. An example of a non-accredited community-led programme is the cookery course requested by members of a local Chinese Mental Health Group who simultaneously gained skills in cookery while improving their English language skills. The college also runs civic involvement and community practitioner courses. It has a programme specifically designed for community capacity building: 'Working in Your Community' enables students from a range of backgrounds to identify and build on the skills, resources and knowledge they need as workers or volunteers. There are no barriers to entry to the range of programmes on offer as an accredited progression ladder is in place, from introductory ESOL and community work courses, to a foundation degree. In some cases people are encouraged to drop in to college provision, while in others the programme comes to their locality. The programmes have progression opportunities into employment or to further community courses. Courses are developed to

meet the needs of residents, community workers and organisations within the community.

140. Partners are actively involved in identifying local learning needs and developing and delivering provision. Community organisations are represented through partnerships and are involved in overseeing the Community Development Awards programme. The college commits a significant amount of resources to partnership working, including senior management time.

141. The college is engaged in multi-agency working, including, for example, work with parents and schools through family literacy projects and 'Becoming a School Governor' training – the latter run in partnership with the Collective of Bangladeshi Governors. These programmes help to engage residents, as does their involvement in the pilot 16–19 citizenship curriculum, which aims to empower sixth form students to play an active role in their community.

Reviewing performance

142. This chapter presents the key findings from two elements of the study:

- a statistical review of performance in the learning and skills sector in deprived areas (the top 15% deprived wards in the 88 local authorities where they are located)
- building on this, a review of available sources of data and other evidence to assess performance.

143. A separate, detailed statistical report, accompanied by tabulations in CD-ROM format, was prepared for the NRU.

Statistics on performance in deprived areas

144. At the heart of the government's National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal is a commitment to improve the quality of public services in the poorest areas – services dealing with education, health, housing, crime and unemployment. This is based on 'a general acknowledgement that poor communities are often served worst by public services and that this helps to compound poverty' (Neighbourhood Renewal Unit 2002a:15). There is also recognition that real, sustainable improvement in conditions in the poorest areas cannot be achieved without harnessing the capacity and the budgets of mainstream local agencies – hence the emphasis in NRU statements on the concept of 'mainstreaming'.

145. A key dimension of this study was therefore a review of available statistics on performance in FE colleges (and to a lesser extent in LEA adult education services).

146. This review relies upon the main indicators currently used for the FE college sector: participation, retention and achievement. By employing geo-demographic analysis, we have mapped the available data according to learners' postcodes and associated population/housing types. This enables comparisons between different areas to be made on a like-with-like basis and thus can assist policy-makers and providers in reviewing the extent to which learning provision in an area is meeting learners' needs.

147. For the college sector (where most learners in the learning and skills sector are found), comprehensive and reliable data is available at ward level. This allows detailed comparisons to be made between the national patterns of participation, retention and achievement and those that apply in each local authority cluster of deprived wards. However, deficiencies in other data sources currently impede reliable comparisons across the learning and skills sector as a whole. The absence of ward-level data for adult and community learning (ACL), school sixth forms, work-based learning (WBL) and higher education, means that our best estimates of participation rates are much more approximate than for the college sector. As they have had to be based

on known rates for wider geographical areas than those confined to the deprived wards, they are likely to overstate the true participation rates from these areas.[5]

148. Statistics on retention and achievement for ACL, school sixth forms, WBL and higher education are not yet available on the same basis as for the college sector. Fully compatible data for school sixth forms should become available later in 2003, for WBL in 2004, and for ACL in 2005. However, comparable participation data for WBL and ACL should be accessible somewhat earlier.

Overall results

149. The overall picture does not suggest substantial problems in performance relating to the deprived wards. In particular, evidence on participation in the learning and skills sector is encouraging, with a significantly higher rate for populations from deprived wards compared with the national average. In colleges, the retention rate for the deprived wards is slightly below the national figure and achievement is 5% below. In neither case do the disparities suggest substantial problems overall.

150. Issues of potential concern relate to:

- participation in school sixth forms, ACL and higher education
- differences in participation and achievement rates across the 88 local authorities.

151. Due to the lack of comparable statistics on retention and achievement, our comments on ACL, school sixth forms and WBL deal solely with participation.

Participation

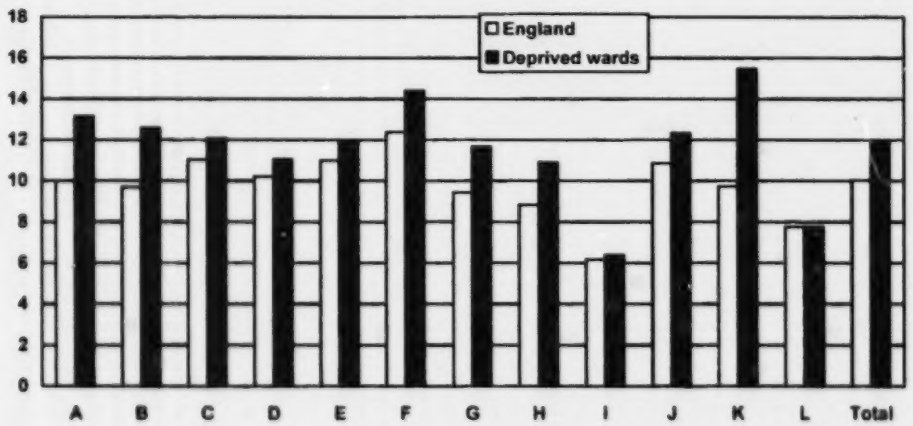
152. In the deprived areas, overall participation in the learning and skills sector (colleges, LEA ACL services, WBL and school sixth forms) is estimated to be around 11% above the national average (16.7% compared with 15.04%).

153. Similarly, in the college sector, overall participation from deprived wards is significantly *above* the national average (just under 12%, compared to a national rate of 10%). This stems primarily from a concentration in these areas of population/housing types that enjoy higher than average college participation rates nationally, including 'blue collar owners' and 'Victorian low status' neighbourhoods (the latter including neighbourhoods with large concentrations of Asian families). Population distribution does not explain the full extent of the variation, however. As illustrated in Figure 1, participation rates in all population/housing types in the deprived areas are above the equivalent national averages.

154. Thus, as far as *overall* participation in the college sector is concerned, the analysis does not suggest any general deficiency in performance relating to the populations of deprived wards. Participation of such individuals on long courses (ie 120 guided learning hours and above) is, in fact, even healthier than the national picture (4.68% of the 15+ population in deprived areas compared with 3.48% nationally). It is therefore well above average on the types of courses that are primarily related to mainstream qualifications.

155. Although our estimates of participation beyond the college sector are likely to inflate the true numbers, significantly lower figures for ACL, schools and WBL would be required before the overall participation rate for the whole learning and skills sector fell below the national level. This is because (as indicated earlier) the bulk of learners within the learning and skills sector are in colleges, where overall deprived area participation rates are significantly above average.

Figure 1: College sector participation rates (percentages) by MOSAIC groups A–L, England and deprived wards



Key to MOSAIC postcode groups

A	High income families	G	Town houses and flats
B	Suburban semis	H	Younger singles
C	Blue collar owners	I	Older households
D	Low rise council housing	J	Younger households
E	Council flats	K	Country dwellers
F	Victorian low status	L	Institutional areas

156. Beyond the college sector, we estimate that aggregate participation in education and training from the deprived wards is significantly *below* the national average. We estimate that participation in ACL is 8% below the national average, in school sixth forms just over 10% below, and in higher education some 19% below. By contrast, in WBL participation rates are estimated to be around 17% higher than the national average

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in areas that include the deprived wards. Note, however, that as we indicated in paragraph 147, these are relatively rough estimates that are likely to overstate the actual participation from deprived areas.[6]

157. Participation rates *vary considerably* across the 88 local authorities that contain the deprived wards that we studied. Based on college data only, 19 of the 88 local authorities have deprived area participation rates that are significantly above both the national average and the average for deprived wards. Moreover, in four of these achievement is significantly above the national average. By contrast, seven of the local authorities have deprived area participation rates significantly below both the national average and the average for deprived wards. In three of these achievement is also well below the national average.

158. In interpreting these figures, we note that a significant proportion of the variation is attributable to geo-demographic groupings that display different participation rates nationally. For example, the deprived wards in Luton are overwhelmingly comprised of 'Victorian low status' neighbourhoods, a housing type that enjoys an above average college sector participation rate nationally. In contrast, the deprived wards in Brighton and Hove have a 'younger singles' population that is over three times the proportion for that group nationally. The national college sector participation rate for this group is significantly below the overall average.

Retention

159. The overall college sector retention rate for deprived wards is slightly *below* the national average. There is little variation across the clusters of deprived areas in the 88 local authorities. Within individual colleges, there is a strong correlation between the retention rates of students from the deprived wards, and the rates for all students. This does not suggest any widespread problem concerning the relative retention of students from deprived areas.

Achievement

160. In the college sector, the overall achievement rate for the deprived areas is approximately 5% below the national average. This difference arises mainly from variations in the distribution of the population, with a bias in the deprived areas towards three geo-demographic categories with below average achievement nationally (low rise council housing, council flats and Victorian low status dwellings). Compared to the retention figures, there are also more differences in achievement rates across the clusters of deprived areas, though to a lesser extent than for participation.

161. As with retention, the achievement rates of learners from the deprived wards are strongly correlated with the overall rates for all students attending the same institutions. There are known links between

deprivation and attainment at the end of compulsory education that impinge on the level and type of qualifications taken thereafter. Taking this into account, though, our evidence does not suggest that college sector learners from deprived areas display achievement rates that are substantially worse than others enrolled on the same types of courses.

Useful performance measures

162. Building on the statistical review, the study considered:

- whether the available data is sufficient to make useful judgements about the contribution of learning provision to neighbourhood renewal
- what other evidence might be useful to the NRU, learning providers and other organisations, in the light of the research findings on the characteristics of good practice.

Measuring participation, retention and achievement

163. Despite the current data problems referred to earlier (paragraph 147), statistics on participation, retention and achievement are likely to provide the most manageable, robust, specific and quantitative source of evidence on performance. This type of data can contribute to judgements about the quality of post-16 education services in deprived areas and their relative success in:

- attracting learner engagement
- motivating learners to complete their courses
- enabling learners to achieve their qualification goals.

164. The main source of quantitative data on participation, retention and achievement must be the LSC's individualised learner record (ILR – formerly the individualised student record (ISR)). The latest available ISR/ILR data provides a comprehensive record of all students enrolled at colleges in the FE sector. The college sector is fully used to supplying extensive data on learners to the LSC in the format required. In 2002, DfES introduced a similarly comprehensive system in respect of schools that is largely compatible with the ILR.[7] The ILR was extended to WBL providers as from the current academic year (2002/03), and it is scheduled to be extended to ACL providers from the next academic year (2003/04).

165. Fully audited data on retention and achievement is only available from the ILR a year in arrears of the end of the academic year to which it applies, though accurate data on participation is accessible at an earlier stage. In the interim period before ILR data becomes available, it is not possible to produce accurate ward-level measures of participation, retention and achievement in respect of WBL or ACL providers because of the difficulty of matching such data with the postcodes of individual learners.

166. A number of organisations – including the LSDA – have been granted Analysis Partner status by LSC, under which they are permitted direct access to the full ILR data set within an agreed code of practice. There is therefore no need to approach individual providers, or the LSC itself, to access the ILR data to support the analyses proposed in paragraph 168.

167. Interpretation of ILR data involves more complexity than for schools. In the latter case, there is one assessment standard against which any one age group is measured. In the former, learners can be enrolled on courses leading to qualifications at any level between 1 and 5. Rates of retention and achievement differ significantly by level. As well as differences in their demography, therefore, valid comparisons between groups of learners also need to take account of differences in take-up and performance by level. The significant differences that also exist in performance by programme area add a similar further complication, as take-up by programme area differs from college to college.

168. Data on participation, retention and achievement (drawn from existing sources and those planned to come on stream, as suggested above), could be used by NRU to support its primary goal of ensuring that 'within 10 to 20 years, no one should be seriously disadvantaged by where they live' (Social Exclusion Unit 2001:8). This kind of data could also assist local LSCs in the context of Strategic Area Reviews in deprived areas (see LSC 2003). The following analyses would be useful.

- Overall rates of participation, retention and achievement for the college sector, and ultimately for schools, WBL and ACL.
- Overall rates of participation, retention and achievement indexed against the national means and the aggregate means for the top 15% of deprived wards in the 88 local authorities concerned. (Note that, in the case of *retention*, the analysis that we have undertaken so far suggests that in the foreseeable future there are unlikely to be many significant variations from the national and deprived area means at the local authority level of aggregation.)
- College sector participation, retention and achievement by MOSAIC groups/types.
- Overall participation, retention and achievement rates adjusted to discount differences from the national profile of population distribution by MOSAIC group.
- Participation rates in higher education, so that college sector and total learning and skills sector participation can be seen in the context of the complete picture of post-16 participation.

- College sector participation, retention and achievement on long courses (ie 120 guided learning hours and above – the courses that in the main lead to the primary mainstream qualifications).

- Proportion of learners enrolled on courses leading to qualifications at Level 3 and above (an indication of relative success at engaging learners at higher levels of attainment).

- National deprived area participation, retention and achievement by ethnicity.

Assessing progress in learning and skills for neighbourhood renewal

169. In addition to the goal of improving the quality of public services, a second, vital objective of the NRU has a narrower focus: namely to improve learning and skills specifically for those involved in neighbourhood renewal work, whether as residents, volunteers, public service professionals or regeneration practitioners.

170. A strong message emerging from our case studies of learning providers was that current measures of success are not always helpful. The perceived lack of consistency between different agencies (including funding bodies) in the fields of learning and skills and regeneration as to quality requirements and priorities is seen as a potential barrier to progress. Moreover, success measures tend to relate primarily to inputs and outputs, rather than to the impact of learning provision on longer-term changes in communities.

171. In view of the above, it may be helpful to consider developing 'broad brush' measures or benchmarks, chiefly of a qualitative nature, to assess progress against three (out of four) areas of good practice identified earlier in this report (see paragraph 32):

    - offering effective learning provision for neighbourhood renewal (concerned with the availability of suitable programmes and courses)

    - engaging the community in planning and developing learning provision for neighbourhood renewal (concerned with ways in which residents, regeneration practitioners and professionals take part in planning and developing provision to meet their needs)

    - working with partnerships to promote learning for neighbourhood renewal.

172. Measures relating to these three goals are likely to have their main value in quality improvement and inspection processes. If learning in support of neighbourhood regeneration activities were to become a more explicit component in quality regimes, clearer judgements could be made about the adequacy and quality of provision and practice and

about comparative performance across the sector. In particular, such measures could be beneficial in:

- LSC Strategic Area Reviews
- LSC provider reviews
- provider self-assessment and development planning
- Ofsted and ALI inspections of individual providers
- area inspections and post-area-inspection planning.

173. In the course of our consultations we noted a number of agencies thought to be developing useful measures of progress and impact (eg the Community Development Foundation, the Scarman Trust, the Regen School and others). We also noted the work by Yorkshire and Humberside RDA in developing benchmarks for community participation in regeneration. The NRU may wish to investigate whether these sources suggest ways forward in benchmarking progress in learning for neighbourhood renewal.

Conclusions

Defining a clear strategic role

174. One of the objectives of the study was to help learning providers develop a well-defined strategic role in neighbourhood renewal. This is in line with the government's increasing emphasis on the need for providers to be clear about their missions and focus on their specific strengths (see DfES 2002). We therefore consider in this chapter the roles that learning providers play in neighbourhood renewal and suggest how these might develop in the future.

175. *The learning curve* points to perceived deficits in training provision directed towards neighbourhood renewal. The LSDA research findings help to qualify this impression. The study revealed a great deal of provision that would be better classified as good outreach and widening participation than as provision designed to equip people with the specific skills needed for neighbourhood renewal work. However, we also found evidence of significant, albeit not widespread, responsive interventions planned with clear neighbourhood renewal objectives in mind.

176. A further, important observation is that 'widening participation' and 'learning for neighbourhood renewal' are not watertight categories of provision. We suggest the concept of a continuum of learning. At one end of the continuum are initiatives aimed at widening participation by engaging learners from disadvantaged groups in learning, often using informal methods. At the other end of the continuum is learning specifically designed to build the capacity of local people and organisations to take part in neighbourhood renewal work. Learning provision covering the full extent of the continuum is essential for successful neighbourhood renewal.

177. How can this analysis be developed to help define a clear strategic role for providers? In considering how learning providers might position themselves, it is useful to examine (a) the outcomes expected for learners (whether individuals, community groups or organisations) and (b) the roles or functions that learning providers perform in the community.[8]

178. Outcomes that providers expect for learners (or that learners expect for themselves) might be categorised in terms of personal interest and development, recreation, acquiring basic skills, achieving a qualification, a stepping-stone to community work, or (better) skills for working in the community. Learners may be working towards several outcomes at once – for example, achieving an IT qualification while learning 'process' skills that will help in managing a neighbourhood project. Alternatively, they might use one set of skills as a stepping-stone to further training or employment – perhaps by improving their English language skills in preparation for training as a classroom assistant or becoming a learning

'advocate' in the community. All of the outcomes have the potential to contribute directly or indirectly to better quality of life for individuals and community groups.

179. Implicit in this is the notion of 'intention' on the part of the learning provider. As shown by our research, providers with a clear commitment to neighbourhood renewal look for ways to build confidence in learners and communities so that they can move towards positive engagement in local action.

180. Turning to the roles that learning providers play in the community: these might be categorised in terms of offering a gateway to learning, improving local skills for economic competitiveness, training local people in specific skills and knowledge for neighbourhood renewal work, acting as a strategic partner, and empowering communities. It should be stressed that these functions, elaborated below, are likely to overlap and any one provider may perform all or fewer, depending on the organisation's strategic priorities.

Gateway to learning

181. As a gateway to learning, providers offer 'first rung', pre-entry and entry level courses, 'fun' learning and 'taster' courses as well as more formal provision up to Level 2. This category includes basic skills and ESOL and skills for employability and social inclusion, for those in work up to Level 2 as well as those not in work. Courses of this type may be aimed at individuals or community groups. Short, informal, non-accredited programmes to stimulate participation and build essential skills are a key element in this kind of work, often acting as a 'hook' for deeper engagement. Our in-depth case study and area study work, including discussions with residents and regeneration practitioners, underlined the necessity for a gateway to learning as a crucial foundation for neighbourhood renewal. Though many of these programmes are not designed with community capacity building in view, they are vital as a means of building the basic skills levels and confidence of groups in the local community, so that they can begin to participate in neighbourhood renewal activities.

Skills for economic competitiveness

182. This covers informal and formal provision designed to improve skills and qualifications, including skills for workforce development (vocational and general education Level 3 and above). Aimed at individuals or community groups, it assists neighbourhood renewal by equipping local people with skills, capability and know-how to take up employment in local labour markets, work more productively and encourage inward investment. Raising skill levels in the most deprived areas will combat social and economic polarisation. Contributing to the skill needs of the economy is one of the primary purposes of the FE college sector.

Specific skills and knowledge for neighbourhood renewal

183. This role is concerned with providing courses that address the specific requirements of *The learning curve*, targeted at residents, regeneration practitioners, professionals and civil servants. The required 'skill set' includes good partnership working and engaging and working through local communities. It covers high as well as lower level skills – our case studies included examples of courses that run from basic skills through to degree level. Provision of this kind can be aimed at individuals, groups or organisations. Particular gaps were noted in our consultations: training for regeneration practitioners, to help improve skills to engage effectively with local residents and community groups; and training for public service professionals, to help them develop a closer understanding of the communities they serve.

Strategic partner

184. At their best, FE colleges and LEA adult education services are experienced and adept at working in or forming networks and partnerships to develop practice and share resources. Indeed, they may be particularly valued as neutral partners capable of brokering consensus in situations where there are local rivalries and tensions. In contrast to some regeneration organisations that are funded for short-term initiatives, colleges and LEA adult learning services are 'there for the long term'. They will therefore have a strong interest in building trust in their communities. They also have the advantage of a wide geographical spread of interest, compared with other providers whose operations may be more localised. This gives them access to wider strategic networks, including links with a broader base of employer contacts.

185. As organisations with substantial experience of quality assurance regimes, some larger learning providers have a valuable contribution to make in helping to 'quality assure' provision in partnerships with smaller learning providers. This function can assist in strengthening the local infrastructure for quality assurance by increasing the capacity of voluntary and community organisations to implement quality procedures.

186. Based on our study, there is scope to develop the role of learning providers as strategic partners in developing local learning plans linked to neighbourhood renewal. Ways to strengthen their connections and credibility with regeneration partners are needed for this purpose.

187. It is important to bear in mind that many providers other than colleges and adult education services are active in neighbourhood renewal learning. The higher education (HE) sector plays an important part, as do many voluntary and private providers, including housing associations and primary healthcare trusts. FE colleges and LEA adult education services will therefore exercise their 'strategic partner' function in

different ways. In some partnerships they will have a leading role and drive partnerships forward, while in others their role will be less prominent.

Community empowerment

188. This role produces one of the most powerful but least 'measurable' outcomes of successful neighbourhood renewal learning. Some learning providers have a conscious aim to build local learning communities that increase confidence and improve local quality of life. Through a range of learning interventions, including broad-based citizenship learning, individuals and groups are enabled to play an active role in local affairs. Such outcomes can help create a sense of 'valued neighbourhoods' as well as developing and reinforcing community cohesion (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister 2002).

What would increase or improve learning provision for neighbourhood renewal?

189. Some providers may be performing all the functions described above. Some may concentrate on one or more. We would argue that, as the implications of the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal and *The learning curve* become more widely understood in the learning and skills sector, there is potential for individual learning providers to increase their contribution to this agenda, where this activity is consistent with their mission and strengths. This could include addressing the specific skill deficits mentioned earlier (paragraph 183).

190. Specific training for neighbourhood renewal may not be an appropriate role for all providers in deprived areas. However, those with a mission to widen participation and a tradition of being involved in local social and economic regeneration may wish to extend or strengthen their commitment to neighbourhood renewal.

191. For this to happen, our research suggests that four conditions are important. These mirror the high-level aims of *Success for all* (DfES 2002):

- providers with strong management and delivery structures, who know their communities well and have excellent partnership links with local community agencies and other stakeholders
- clear and shared vision and goals at local level
- sustainable funding and other resources (particularly staffing and facilities)
- a common understanding of what constitutes success and impact in learning for neighbourhood renewal, and robust ways to monitor this.

192. Following *Success for all*, providers are expected to review and develop their missions, in consultation with their local LSCs. This may offer an opportunity to identify 'untapped' potential for neighbourhood renewal learning in existing provision and practice, and to embed a commitment to stronger partnership with other providers to meet neighbourhood renewal goals.

193. We propose that a further way to encourage learning providers to develop their roles will be to publish a good practice handbook based on the results of this research and to disseminate it widely, perhaps through regional workshops. The feasibility and desirability of doing this might be tested through contact with learning providers who contributed to the case studies and area studies. Among the areas of work where we believe providers may benefit from further guidance are:

- ways to support learning and skills for neighbourhood renewal as part of a local plan
- how to integrate these skills into other programmes
- ways to identify and support the progress of local people with leadership potential.

Appendix 1: Study methods

Policy review

The purpose of this review was to examine the extent to which changes to the post-16 learning and skills policy environment, particularly in relation to FE colleges, are likely to support neighbourhood renewal-related knowledge and skills development. The review was based on desk research, in particular, a review of key documents on:

- neighbourhood renewal policy and the NRU's strategy for learning
- policy for the post-16 learning and skills sector.

Questionnaire survey

The purpose of the questionnaire was to find out how LEA adult education services and FE colleges contribute to neighbourhood renewal in deprived areas, and to help identify suitable case study sites. A questionnaire was sent to:

- FE colleges and external institutions with postcodes matching the 88 neighbourhood renewal areas
- all LEA adult learning services
- additional FE colleges and external institutions recruiting significant numbers of learners from local authorities other than the 88 neighbourhood renewal areas, but with wards with high levels of deprivation.

Samples and response rates were as follows:

Provider	Sample	Respondents	Response rate %
FE colleges	305	171	56
LEA adult learning services	173	68	39
External institutions	102	32	31
Total	580	271	47

Case studies of learning providers

Drawing on the results of the questionnaire survey, 10 learning providers were selected for in-depth case study visits. Objectives were to:

- find out what provision and practice is in place to meet the learning needs of key client groups involved in neighbourhood renewal
- seek informed views on what works (and what does not work)
- refine a set of draft characteristics of good practice that describe a responsive approach to learning for neighbourhood renewal
- seek information that would help raise awareness of the role played by the learning and skills sector in neighbourhood renewal.

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Case study visits took place, covering five FE colleges, four LEA adult education services and one external institution. Discussions were held with senior staff and where possible with learners. The case studies involved testing and refining a set of draft characteristics of good practice, devised on the basis of relevant literature and discussion with NRU and expert consultants.

Case study colleges/LEAs

Bristol Community Education
Burnley College
Derby LEA
East London Advanced Technology Training (ELATT)
Islington LEA
Medway ACL
North Warwickshire and Hinckley College
Northern College
Park Lane College
Tower Hamlets College

Small area studies

Two small area studies were designed with the purpose of looking 'in the round' at learning provision for neighbourhood renewal in relation to the needs of a particular area (eg a neighbourhood, ward or borough). This had the advantage of providing a different perspective to complement the case studies of colleges and LEA adult education services, which focused mainly on the provider perspective.

Study methods included interviews and focus group discussions with:

- residents and community leaders
- regeneration managers/practitioners
- voluntary and community sector managers/leaders
- learning providers.

The initial plan was to base both area studies on New Deal for Communities partnerships. We looked for NDCs with promising approaches to learning for neighbourhood renewal (based on sources such as delivery plans and early evaluation results). We also looked for areas where our questionnaire survey indicated that learning providers had lessons to share and were willing to participate in case studies. East Manchester NDC was chosen as the site for one study.

In view of difficulties in finding a second NDC that met the requirements for the study, a different approach was adopted. An area study was built around a college and LEA with evidence of useful practice in developing learning for neighbourhood renewal, and with different area population characteristics from East Manchester. South Birmingham was the selected location, in the

broader context of Birmingham City Council's neighbourhood renewal strategy.

Small area study sites

East Manchester (Beacons) New Deal for Communities

Representatives of the following agencies were consulted:

Beacons New Deal for Communities
East Manchester Voluntary Sector Consortium
Manchester Adult Education Service
Manchester College of Art and Technology (MANCAT)
New East Manchester Ltd EAZ
Step Ahead, Beswick
Sure Start
Tameside College

South Birmingham – Sparkbrook/Sparkhill

Representatives of the following agencies were consulted:

Balsall Heath Forum
Birmingham and Solihull LSC
Birmingham LEA
Birmingham Voluntary Services Council
City College Birmingham
Economic Development Department, Birmingham City Council
Ethiopian World Federation
Fircroft College
Lifelong Learning Division, Education Service, Birmingham City Council
Parent Partnership, Sparkhill
Policy Development Department, Birmingham City Council
South Birmingham College
Sparkhill Neighbourhood Forum

Statistical review

The purpose of the statistical review was to examine the performance of FE colleges (and, to a lesser extent, LEA adult education services) in deprived areas. The review was based mainly on the LSC's individualised student record (ISR) data set for 2000/01, the latest fully audited data available at the time of writing. The ISR contains detailed records for every student enrolled on LSC-funded courses at FE colleges, sixth form colleges, specialist colleges and external institutions.

In addition, and to the extent that suitable data was available, we examined student data concerning school sixth forms, WBL, ACL provision under the control of LEAs, and higher education.

For each of the 88 local authorities containing the most deprived wards, we mapped the college sector ISR data on participation, retention and achievement according to students' postcodes, using MOSAIC, one of the best-known UK software packages for geo-demographic analysis. Via the analysis of national census data, plus consumer and opinion survey data, MOSAIC identifies 52 separate types of postcode that are statistically different from each other in terms of the characteristics of their residents. These are banded together into 12 main postcode groups, as follows:

A	1–5	High income families
B	6–8	Suburban semis
C	9–12	Blue collar owners
D	13–17	Low rise council housing
E	18–23	Council flats
F	24–29	Victorian low status
G	30–32	Town houses and flats
H	33–36	Younger singles
I	37–40	Older households
J	41–44	Younger households
K	45–50	Country dwellers
L	51–52	Institutional areas

The statistical basis of the categorisation is very robust and therefore provides a more precise and useful foundation than the traditional occupation-based six-category socio-economic groupings. A wealth of information on demographic characteristics, lifestyles, opinions etc of each postcode type is available to MOSAIC licence holders. This information – and the allocation of postcodes to categories – is updated continually via surveys conducted on representative samples of the UK population, and from national census data.

The use of MOSAIC to map the ISR enables comparisons between different areas to be made on a like-with-like basis, since it allows differences in the profiles of populations and student numbers across the MOSAIC categories to be taken into account. Indexes are also employed in order to facilitate the ready identification of significant variations from the mean.

Both national aggregate and detailed local authority tables were produced for the NRU, the latter tables in CD-ROM format.

Review of data sources

This element of the study was designed to assist the NRU in identifying measures that could be used in future to assess how well the learning and skills sector is responding to neighbourhood renewal objectives. Building on the statistical review, the study considered:

- whether the available data was sufficient to make useful judgements about the contribution of learning provision to neighbourhood renewal
- what other evidence might be useful to help assess performance.

Appendix 2: Courses contributing to neighbourhood renewal

Introduction

LSDA's questionnaire was designed to find out about courses and programmes that contribute *specifically* to neighbourhood renewal. We defined this as 'courses or programmes that equip local residents, professionals and regeneration practitioners with the knowledge and skills they need to promote neighbourhood renewal and improve services in deprived areas'.

The examples listed below were selected from open-ended responses to the questionnaire. They do not represent an exhaustive list of all the potentially relevant activities recorded in the questionnaire responses. Rather, they serve to illustrate the range of provision that could be categorised as specifically relevant to 'community capacity building', using the above definition. Five points should be noted:

- enrolment numbers, where given, were often very small (in some cases fewer than 10)
- few indications were given as to whether the courses were one-off examples (run only once in response to a particular demand) or offered on a regular basis
- respondents did not always indicate the target group for the course – the categories below are based on LSDA assessment
- as this list was derived solely from open-ended responses to the questionnaire survey, it may not cover all the courses identified in the case studies and area studies that followed. In particular, three relevant providers are missing from the list: Manchester College of Arts and Technology, Medway ACL and Fircroft College. Commentary on these is included in the main report
- capitalisation within the lists may be variable, as it was not always clear from the responses whether an actual course title or general description was given.

The examples give code numbers for relevant learning providers. A key to the names of providers can be found at the end of this appendix.

Courses aimed at residents

- Organisational skills for community groups **6**
- Introduction to Running Your Own Co-operative – used in rural coalfield community settings **13**
- 'Green Team' – a New Deal project working in partnership with the community to train residents from a very deprived area to clear and tidy gardens of empty houses ready for re-let **14**

- Programme to upskill local tenants on a deprived estate, to enable them to participate in local regeneration **23**
- Learning Champions programme **25 see also 72**
- Committee skills for tenants' associations **26 see also 51, 123**
- Barefoot Helper training programme **32**
- Community newsletter course **32**
- Active citizenship course **33**
- NCFE intermediate and advanced courses in 'working in your community' **34 see also 45, 114, 118, 123, 196**
- Learning mentors in schools courses **34**
- Positive Press and Gardening schemes – user led, supported by tutors, aimed at providing positive images of the area **40**
- Foundation Housing – training tenants to play an active role in decision-making for a resource centre, and committee skills for young adults **40**
- ESOL classroom assistants – supporting local residents with ESOL needs to become classroom assistants and support their community **45**
- Non-accredited course on the skills/knowledge needed to run a community management committee – for local residents running their local community venue **52**
- For community activists – Community Leadership award; Neighbourhood Animateurs Programme; Health Animateurs Programme **56**
- National Certificate in Tenant Participation (aimed at tenants and housing professionals) **56**
- Course aimed at volunteers who work in the community to encourage learning **57 see also 157, 196**
- Short courses to give residents skills and confidence to participate in community project meetings and steering committees **73**
- Course for adults mentoring adults – specifically linked to education and employment **94**
- New course offering essential skills for outreach workers – voluntary sector, residents, professionals **96**
- Community involvement for women (getting women involved in local politics) **108**
- Food hygiene course for group of women wanting to start a local sandwich business **108**
- Public speaking for community members **111**
- Community leadership programme and training of Commonwealth volunteers **112**
- NCFE starting a business course – for residents wanting to be self-employed **114**
- Support scheme to train volunteers to work on literacy and numeracy in local schools **122**
- ICT training to train peers in local ICT centres **127 see also 249**
- Confidence, presentation, financial literacy skills for establishing groups **127**
- Developing a community website **132**
- Promoting equality of opportunity – short awareness raising course for parents and practitioners **137**
- Meteor – training ethnic minority adults to teach on adult learning courses **176**

- Community facilitators training for local residents **184**
- Renewal Board training for local residents, professionals and practitioners **184**
- Street wardens training **184**
- Participatory research appraisal for volunteers and local residents engaged in community consultation **197**
- Barefoot Basic Skills Worker programme **207**
- Keep Safe, Be Safe – basic skills linked to crime prevention in NDC area **210**
- 'Be a Schooi Governor' – aimed at increasing Bangladeshi governors **212**

Courses aimed at professionals/public service workers

- Translation courses for health workers **16**
- 'Gatekeeper' training for local people (libraries, health sector, employment service, youth workers, social workers, employment agencies) to enable them to recognise basic skills needs in clients and refer them on **199**
- Outreach programmes including early years education and training for crèche workers, carers etc **11**
- Mediation courses **25**
- National Certificate in Tenant Participation (aimed at tenants and housing professionals) **56**
- Courses for primary healthcare centre (eg NVQ Care, OCR NVQ Business Admin) **75**
- New course offering essential skills for outreach workers: voluntary sector, residents, professionals **96**
- Promoting equality of opportunity – short awareness raising course for parents and practitioners **137**
- Teacher education and continuing professional development courses for teachers **155, 229, 239**
- Community engagement toolkit for neighbourhood learning centre staff and local residents **175**
- Sure Start Parent Researchers (aimed at teachers on family learning schemes?) **175**
- Basic skills awareness training for probation service staff **176**
- Renewal Board training for local residents, professionals and practitioners **184**

Courses aimed at regeneration practitioners

- For neighbourhood project workers – Meeting Audit Requirements and Implementing Quality Assurance to Meet External Scrutiny **39**
- Programme for neighbourhood wardens **88**
- Learning Ambassadors project – kitbag of skills for volunteers and workers reaching culturally isolated groups **96**
- Promoting equality of opportunity – short awareness-raising course for parents and practitioners **137**
- Renewal Board training for local residents, professionals and practitioners **184**

- Foundation degree in Community Enterprise and Development for people working in the voluntary sector and in local government alongside the voluntary and community sector, and for those involved in regeneration activities **201, 232**

Courses aimed at voluntary/community organisations and groups

- OCN-accredited modules for the voluntary sector **21**
- Know Your Rights – to enable community organisations to give advice to community members **41**
- Introduction to management for people with management responsibilities in community organisations **41**
- Short courses on basic financial management and budgets to run a community association **51**
- Customised management programmes for the voluntary sector, jointly planned **95**
- New course offering essential skills for outreach workers – voluntary sector, residents, professionals **96**
- OCN IAG course for community volunteers **103**
- Community group skills (OCN) **103**
- Course on bidding to help community groups access funding **111**
- Running an IT centre (course aimed at community groups) **130**
- Community work training for volunteers and paid workers working with small community groups (nationally accredited) **131 see also 72**
- Foundation degree in Community Enterprise and Development for people working in the voluntary sector and in local government alongside the voluntary and community sector, and for those involved in regeneration activities **201**

Key to learning providers

6 Varndean College
11 Hartlepool College of Further Education
13 Northumberland College
14 City College, Manchester
16 Guildford College of Further and Higher Education
21 Exeter College
23 Barnet College
25 North Tyneside College
26 Halesowen College
32 Newcastle-under-Lyme College
33 Preston College
34 South Birmingham College
39 GLOSCAT
40 Park Lane College
41 Matthew Boulton College
45 Bromley College of Further and Higher Education
51 Kensington and Chelsea College
52 Stockton and Billingham College

56 Northern College
57 Highbury College
72 Burnley College
73 City College, Brighton and Hove
75 Bexley College
88 City of Westminster College
94 Selby College
95 City College, Birmingham
96 Dudley College
103 Middlesbrough Adult Education Service
108 Leeds City Council
111 Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council
112 Manchester Adult Education Service
114 Brent Adult and Community Education Service
118 Hull City Council Adult Education Service
122 Surrey County Council
123 London Borough of Hounslow (Education)
127 Warwickshire County Council
130 Oxford City Council
131 Sutton College of Learning for Adults
132 West Berkshire LEA
137 Pre-School Learning Alliance (Midlands Region)
155 Urban Learning Foundation
157 Bourneville College of Further Education
175 Islington LEA
176 Derby LEA
184 Swindon Borough Council
196 Doncaster College
197 Bury College
199 Harlow College
201 North Warwickshire and Hinckley College
207 West Cheshire College
210 City College Norwich
212 Tower Hamlets College
229 Lambeth College
232 City College Coventry
239 Westminster Kingsway College
249 ELATT (East London Advanced Technology Training)

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Abbreviations and acronyms

ACL	adult and community learning
ALI	Adult Learning Inspectorate
CLR	Community Learning Representative
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
EAZ	Education Action Zone
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
FE	further education
FRESA	Framework for Regional Employment and Skills Action
HE	higher education
IAG	Information, Advice and Guidance
ICT	information and communication technologies
ILR	individualised learner record
ISR	individualised student record
IT	information technology
LEA	local education authority
LID	Local Intervention and Development Fund
LIF	Local Initiative Fund
LSC	Learning and Skills Council
LSDA	Learning and Skills Development Agency
NDC	New Deal for Communities
NIACE	National Institute of Adult and Continuing Education
NLDC	Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities (Fund)
NRU	Neighbourhood Renewal Unit
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
OCN	Open College Network
RDA	Regional Development Agency
SRB	Single Regeneration Budget
StAR	Strategic Area Review
TEC	Training and Enterprise Council
WBL	work-based learning

Notes

[1] The Leadership College for the learning and skills sector, announced by the DfES in January 2003, will be run by a consortium comprising the LSDA, the Open University, Lancaster University Management School and Ashridge.

[2] See newsletters from the LSDA 16–19 Citizenship Development Programme, September 2002, January 2003.

[3] See *Training and the Community Economic Development Framework*. This classifies communities according to the presence in them of community groups and the level of their activities (eg working in partnership or managing large projects). Cited in *Academy for community leaders: a model for discussion*. Objective 1 (South Yorkshire) Programme Directorate (enquiries to Northern College).

[4] More recently, LEA ACL providers have benefited from a DfES-funded quality support programme (delivered by LSDA in partnership with NIACE) to equip them to respond to new quality assurance and inspection regimes introduced by the LSC and the ALI.

[5] Participation rates for ACL, school sixth forms and higher education were estimated on the basis of *DfES Statistical First Release: adult education enrolments in England*; *DfES Government Supported Training Database 2000–2001*; and the UCAS *Statistical bulletin on widening participation*, editions 2000 and 2001 (Cromar and Green 2000; Daniels and Green 2001) on full-time enrolments to undergraduate courses 1998–2000. The estimates that we have used were arrived at as described below.

As DfES data on participation rates in ACL are available broken down by LEA, we have assumed that participation from deprived wards in 2000/01 was at the same rate as for the LEA in which they are located. Relative differences in LEA participation rates in ACL that arise from structural differences in the location of provision between the college and LEA sectors are therefore taken into account. Differences that occur between participation from deprived wards and that from the other wards located within the same local authorities are not.

Data from the DfES school statistics tables showing sixth form numbers by local LSC area have been used to calculate participation rates. The rates concerned have then been assumed to apply to the deprived wards according to their location within each of the local LSC areas. A similar procedure has been used to estimate participation in WBL, based on enrolments in former TEC regions. In both cases, therefore, our estimates take account of local LSC area-wide differences in participation rates. However, differences that occur between participation from deprived wards and that from the other wards located within the same local authorities are not captured.

Data was obtained from the UCAS *Statistical bulletin on widening participation* editions 2000 and 2001 (on the intakes equivalent to the data held on the 2000/01 ISR). A national breakdown by MOSAIC group was also available. The participation rate for each MOSAIC group was then assumed to apply consistently, and was used to arrive at the overall participation rate within each of the clusters of deprived areas in the 88 local authorities. These estimates therefore take account of differences in participation that reflect the relative population breakdowns in the clusters of deprived

wards, but do not capture any of their variations from the national participation rate for each MOSAIC group.

Outside the college sector, any comparisons included in the report between the participation from deprived areas and that which applies nationally must therefore be treated with considerable caution. In particular, our estimates are likely to exaggerate the true rates of participation from the deprived wards, as our data on participation rates is drawn from wider geographical areas. However, as the assumptions we have made within each sub-sector have been applied consistently, we believe that the general pattern of inter-local authority comparisons that emerges in the data tables (presented to NRU) is meaningful, as they capture some of the variations in participation that apply.

[6] See note 5.

[7] PLASC: Pupil-Level Annual Schools Census.

[8] This section draws on work by the LSDA on the development of a new typology for adult learning (Learning and Skills Development Agency 2003b).

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